

Mexican Life

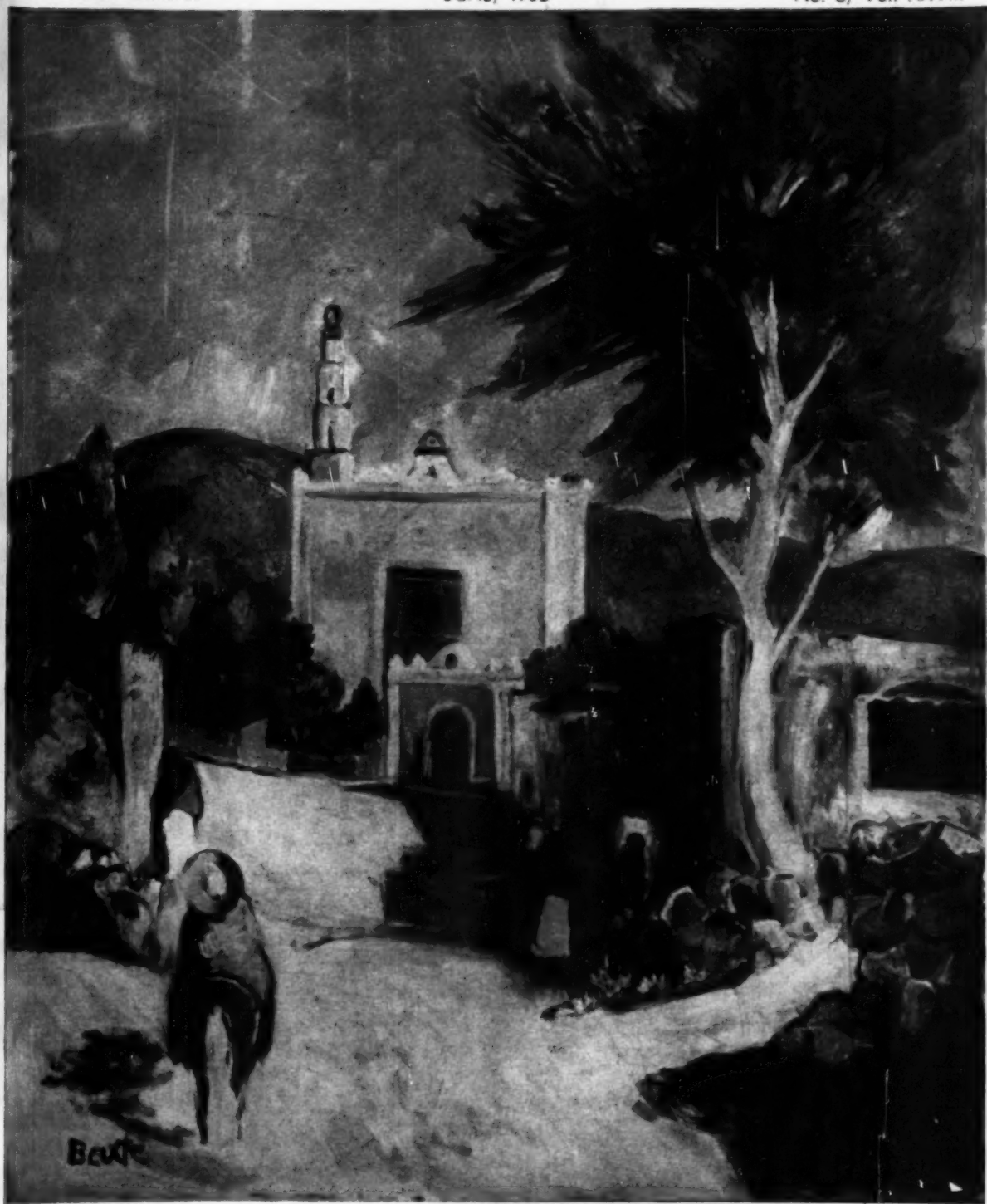
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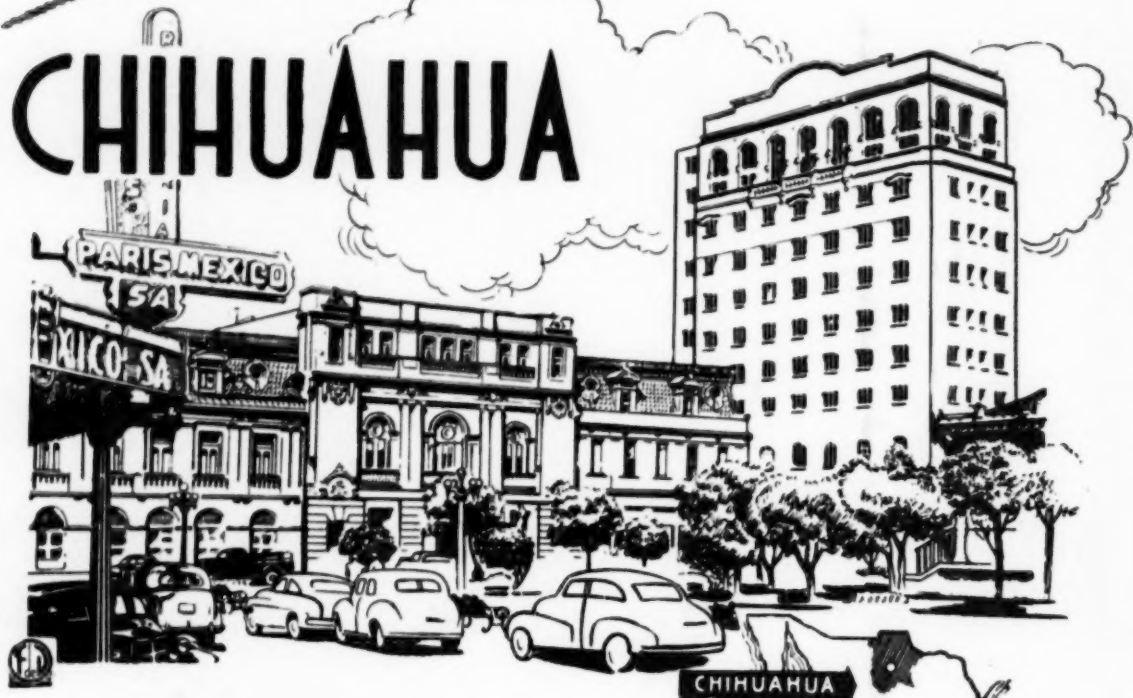
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VILLAGE IN JALISCO

By Michael Bente

Mexico

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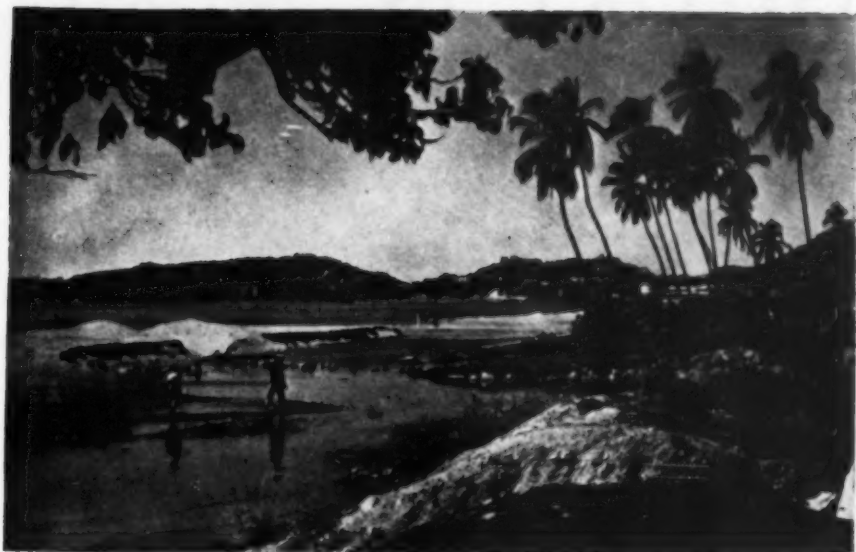
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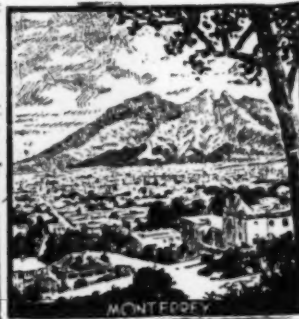
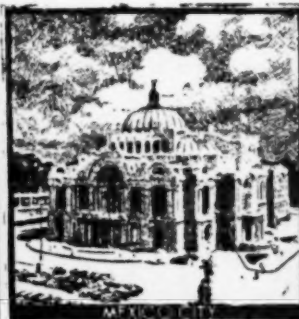
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HOWARD S. PHILLIPS

EDITOR

How Much is the Peso Worth Now?

ALTHOUGH price stability has not been reached and the trend of inflation has not been definitely checked, no big new rise in prices is in sight in Mexico, unless it is produced by external factors, by conditions in the world at large. In other words, barring the latter factors, the Mexican peso—a twenty-centavo peso in purchasing value compared with 1939—is likely to hold its value in the foreseeable future, and even to recuperate some of its strength in a longer course of time.

This forecast is based on the fact that the decline in the purchasing value of Mexican money has not signified, as it has in countries of Europe since the end of the World War, a decline in national economy. It may seem anomalous that the marked depreciation of the peso during the past twelve years has not been due to economic retrogression or inertia, but, on the contrary, to an economic progress and expansion that has no parallel in the nation's history. Indeed, despite the fact that the purchasing value of its money has shrunk to one fifth of its former strength, in terms of real wealth, especially that of its capacity for agricultural and industrial production, Mexico is in an incomparably stronger position today than it was twelve years ago.

This apparently contradictory condition has been created by internal as well as external causes. The unprecedented growth in Mexico's population—from twenty to twenty-five million in ten years—has signified a corresponding increase in consumption, an increase which despite a greatly expanded production has maintained the domestic market in a state of scarcity rather than abundance. This, hitherto, has been the main internal factor of inflation. Throughout foregone years, Mexico has been, so to speak, running a race between rising production and rising consumption, a race which now has been largely won, for the recent signal increase in the volume of agricultural and industrial production is considerably ahead of the demand ensuing from the increase in its population. In various items, such as cotton, sugar and crude oil, Mexico is, moreover, producing a considerable surplus for sale abroad.

Scarcity of supply has been also to some extent accentuated by the elevation in living standards—by the higher norms of per capita consumption—among a large section of the population, especially among city inhabitants. For while it is undeniable that poverty is still a widely prevalent condition, the gradual liquidation of illiteracy and the generally heightened cultural standards achieved in recent years have also tended to raise the material standards of living.

The rising level of prices has been mainly due, however, to factors of external origin. No country in the world has an entirely autonomous economy; all

to a greater or lesser degree are interdependent, and each is subject to the influence of forces originating in others—an influence whose impact is greatly magnified and intensified when affecting an economy like Mexico's, which is barely emerging from early stages of development.

Mexico has been spared the ravages of war, and yet the incalculable destruction of wealth it entailed throughout a large part of the world has directly affected this country's economy. Price inflation, or the depreciation in the purchasing value of money, resulting from scarcity in countries that have suffered the devastation of war, has exerted its inevitable effect in Mexico as well as in the rest of the world.

The war in Korea and the menace of a new world conflict, compelling the United States and the other democratic nations to resort to rearmament, has meant in the economic front the use and channeling of multiple resources to carry out this objective, and this has perpetuated everywhere a condition of scarcity and a high price level. And while on the one hand the increased demand on some raw materials Mexico produces and sells abroad has brought about higher prices which have benefited Mexico, on the other this benefit has been more than offset by the higher prices Mexico must pay for the goods and equipment it is compelled to purchase abroad in order to keep its economic system operating at the present pace of utmost production and employment.

These have been the basic factors which in the course of the past twelve years have brought down the purchasing strength of the peso to its current low level. Since, however, the inflation trend has affected both income and prices, general living conditions are not any worse than they were in 1939. They are, in fact, considerably better because of the increased per capita productiveness of the population. The average Mexican, in other words, is today producing more and consuming more than he did twelve years ago. And this, in the final analysis, is the only thing that matters.

The vast constructive program carried out by the government of President Alemán, in stimulating the expansion of industries, in reclaiming great extensions of formerly useless soil through irrigation, in communicating the entire national territory with new railways and highways, is only beginning to produce its material benefits. Its complete and ultimate benefits will accrue in years to come. And the constructive task carried out by this government will undoubtedly be continued by the following administration.

Thus it is safe to assume that regardless of the fluctuation in the purchasing value of its monetary unit, Mexico, in terms of actual well-being, is marching forward at a healthy stride.

Guide

By Sylvia Martin

FAUSTO Quero's father was the first guide and caretaker of the Mitla ruins. The post is a government appointment, but things are done in the old way in this remote corner of southern Mexico. Son follows father.

Fausto's son, however, presents a difficulty. He is only one year old, and his father is sixty. "He will have to grow very fast," Quero said. "But no matter. We are all related here in Mitla. We are all one family."

The Mitla ruins are triple-starred in the guide book. You read there how in prehistory the Zapotec Indians created in the broad red valley of Oaxaca a unique civilization; how they were overrun by the Mixtecs, and then by the Spaniards. In Mitla the Conquistadors half-wrecked the ancient buildings. With the stones they erected in a temple court a church far inferior to what they had razed.

Fausto Quero, tracing the hieroglyphs on the broken palace walls, speaks of "my ancestors" as you would say "my grandparents." For the people of Mitla kept their identity—through intermarriage. They remain close-knit, communal, and Indian. Quero is their respected elder, the link between their common past and the tourist present.

Thousands of tourists come to Mitla. Quero takes them through underground tombs and ornamented temples as if he were host and these his ancestral halls. Put in the sightseeing routine one usually listens to the inevitable guide with half an ear. How is the casual visitor to sense that this man of the self-

taught English is not the stereotyped herder of tourists? The undecipherable symbols he points out are not to him part of a routine patter. They are a message written by his people, and maybe some day he will know what they say.

Released by Quero, the tourist fell into the ambush set by Mitla's housewives and daughters. The sales talk is in the queer clicking Zapotec dialect. The visitors ransom themselves by buying lace and embroidered belts, escaping to their cars with only a glance at the town adjoining the ruins and the Spanish church, these blocks of adobe and thatched huts behind cactus fences separated by red dirt lanes seem worth no more than a glance. Mitla looks hot, dusty, and primitive.

"... One big family," said Fausto Quero. "A good family. No quarrels. We are all well off here, and when one lives well one does not quarrel."

Mitla, he said, is a community of three thousand inhabitants simply governed. For instance, when any public work is to be done, the mayor calls the people together. He explains the project and tells how much money is needed. Those who can, give money; the rest give their labor.

The men are farmers, members of an ejido. They are also traders, riding on their burros to villages two days distant to buy coffee and fruit which they sell in the market at home.

And while farming and trading might seem to be enough for a people who live as hardily as the first American settlers, there are other sources of income—the women and children.

Behind the cactus fences lie the functional households of Mitla. I spent a long time in one of them. In the wide courtyard two sons were weaving rope from maguey fiber. Three daughters were crocheting lace that they would sell to tomorrow's load of tourists. The old grandmother was carding and spinning wool from which she would make belts—taking the whole process herself from the raw wool to the dyeing and embroidering. In the rough pasture lands beyond, the smallest boys of the family were tending sheep.

The grandmother welcomed me with dignity. "Enter Señora, but"—the dignity disappeared in a shrewd flash—"how much do you offer?" I handed her a small coin. "No! Not enough! 'quintos' we want, not 'centavitos'!"

"... It is not as good as it once was," Fausto Quero had told me. "Pride has gone. You would think the women and children were beggars the way they demand money. They do not need it. I have told them many times they must not do this. But what can you do when the tourist comes and he sees a face he likes and shows his pleasure with a coin? And more, they want money to buy shoes and modern clothes and to go to the cinema in Oaxaca City. I will tell you a bitter thing: there are, alas, forty radios in Mitla."

He counted on the good side, however, a new craft which had sprung up because of the tourists. The women have taken up to fashioning little clay images, most of them in the form of fantastic animals.

I was holding one in my hand a green-glazed, grinning, frog-like creature. Quero studied it. "They would have been pleased, eh?" he commented, raising a quizzical eyebrow.

It was the highest praise, for by "they" he meant the master craftsmen who raised the majestic walls of Mitla.



Ruins of Mitla, Oaxaca.
Photo. By F. Vivas.

And so to Bed in Tehuantepec

By Hudson Strode

WHEN Barker arrived at six-fifteen to accompany us to the station, he carried a large paper sack of something which he handled as tenderly as if it might be gold dust. We were lucky, he said—the train was only two and a half hours late today. As we reached the crowded platform we heard its whistle. We pushed through the multicolored jam until Barker stopped before a short, good-looking, middle-aged Indian woman who wore the costume of her people. "This is my wife," Barker said simply by way of introduction.

I was unprepared for Señora Barker. I had thought of her as Mexican but not as full-blooded Indian. Barker introduced his daughters, who had come to see their mother off. One was the wife of the younger Guasti. The other daughter was unmarried. They were both attractive mestizas, and the only women on the platform not in Tehuana costume. Their quiet American-style clothes were in excellent taste, but they looked oddly out of place among the swirling colors of the flowing skirts and huipils.

In the coach Myer and I rode backward, facing Barker and his wife. Barker's six feet two made him tower in Tehuantepec, even when he sat, and in the whole coach his were the only pair of blue eyes. Beside the big white alien, little Señora Barker, in her orange huipil and rust-red skirt, sat very erect, with the dignity of a princess. She was too self-consciously poised to be demure. Her features were delicately molded, and her eyes were full of knowledge. She cast one resigned glance at the full paper bag on her husband's knees and then looked out the window. Her husband was interrupting her visit to her daughter to take her back home to cook for us. I felt that she had a right to be resentful.

Barker continued to hold the bag with both hands as tenderly as if it contained an objet d'art retrieved from a tomb at Monte Albán. "Pancakes tomorrow for breakfast," he said with a gleam in his eye as he gave the bag a pat. "Real American pancakes. My wife makes 'em as good as you've ever eaten. A Scotchman—of all people—taught her to make pancakes over thirty years ago, before we were married. She cooked on the ranch where he and I were co-managers. When he left for another part of Mexico, he planned to lure her away, but I fooled him—I married her. She was the most beautiful thing you've ever seen. I'll show you her picture. I was completely mad about her."

I glanced with concern at Señora Parker. She returned my glance momentarily, but there was no comment on her husband's remarks in her eyes. She turned to gaze out the window at the fields of flax.

"She doesn't understand English," her husband said. "She speaks Spanish though, as well as her native Zapotec. She's a full-blooded Zapotec. We've been married thirty years. I've never regretted my marriage."



TEHUANA. Water Color.

By Miguel Covarrubias.

As dusk fell swiftly an attendant turned on the weak lights in the coach. "It's good we're traveling first-class," Barker said with a wink. "When the engine needs refueling, the second-class passengers have to help." He looked out into the dusk. "But we'll have to walk home in the dark."

"Can't we take a taxi?"

His laugh was like a little snort. "There's no such thing as a taxi in the town of Tehuantepec."

"How far do you live from the station?"

"Less than a mile."

Myers glanced at the suitcases up in the rack.

"We're lucky not to be arriving in a cloudburst," Barker said. "We had a few earlier in the week, just as the train got in. This country! Oh me, oh my!"

But you must like it. You've lived here forty years. It must have something."

"Well—" Barker gave an expansive shrug as the engine began to shriek warnings of arrival. It slowed down and crawled toward the station. Barker stood up, handed his wife the precious bag of pancake flour, and began reaching for the suitcases. "Here we are. Welcome to Tehuantepec!"

But we did not have to carry our own luggage. A tobacco-colored oldster and two youths boarded the train before it came to a stop and took charge of the bags. Outside, it was night already, and for the benefit of the teeming humanity pouring out of the coaches onto the platform the stationmaster had lighted one kerosene lamp. In the west a new moon was like a slit in a dark-blue paper screen. Beyond the station the engine's headlight shot a stream of light down the tracks where millions of buttercups were blossoming between the crossties and along the shallow railroad embankment. The light was like a stream of liquid gold, and illumined the parallel dirt road we had to traverse. By the illumination of the silver curve in the sky and the hosts of buttercups along the tracks, we proceeded due west into the town. The rocky road rose and fell, with loose stones and sudden depressions to be negotiated. When the little houses of stone or white mud cut off the beam of the

headlight, we trod with caution. We came into the town and passed the dim-lit elevated plaza on the left and the empty market with its columns and shadows on the right.

Before the Barker wall gate we paused, and he rang the bell. "The Pan-American highway is coming here right by my house," Barker said. "In fact, this southwest corner of my wall must be lopped off to give the road the proper width. They are going to buy me the property next to make up for it."

When the gate swung open, a woman who looked strikingly like his wife, but ten years older, appeared. She mumbled a greeting, received from Barker's hand the bag of flour, and scurried away. The patio was bathed in soft moonshine. We paused to admire. Shadows of palm trees lay along the paved courtyard. In the back middle distance a young girl seemed to be making ritualistic gestures, her right arm moving to right and left in graceful strokes. A large basket sat at her feet and a brazier of glowing coals. She was ironing clothes in the dim moonlight.

A strange metallic cry in the shadow of a flowering shrub made me start. Something like a baby ostrich ran out on swift but awkward legs to greet us. Then, recognizing strangers, he hurried away on his hinged stilts. "That's Tony, the night bird," Barker explained. "He's rounding up the mosquitoes and insects, so we won't be plagued. I'll show you to your room."

The girl stopped her ironing, rushed into the kitchen and then back across the patio. She bore a stubby oil lamp in each hand like an extrawise virgin. Then, almost as swiftly as if she had merely rubbed one of the lamps Aladdin-fashion, she was back bearing ewers of water.

The beamed-ceiling bedroom was huge, with four double beds and several wardrobes. Through the iron bars on the street window the pale moonlight sifted gently onto one of the beds. I chose that one, while Myers took the bed with the crucifix above it. In looking for a place to hang my coat I opened one of the vast wardrobes. Seven long skirts and huipils and lace headresses hung there, like the relics of Bluebeard's seven wives. I opened another wardrobe door and was confronted by a row of white duck trousers and a couple of young men's coats. I draped my own coat on a chair back. "I'm afraid some of the family have had to give up their room," I said to Myers, who was making his ablutions at the washstand. "But if the guests would all sleep in this one room this *caravanera* could accommodate eight persons."

"Listen! What's that?" Myers said.

Out in the rocky street there was a creaking sound of wooden wheels and of heavy animal hoofs on the hard surface. At a command, the sounds ceased. Our luggage had arrived by oxcart.

A remarkably good-looking chap clad only in white duck trousers appeared in the doorway with our two bags. Barker followed him in. "This is my son," he said. "He is called Willie. He is sixteen."

The youth set the bags down and smiled broadly. He had beautiful teeth as well as eyes. We each shook hands with him and thanked him. He said, "De nada," smiled again, and disappeared.

When we came out on the veranda, Barker had poured the V-8 vegetable juice cocktails from his last can. The veranda was divided into two unequal sections. The smaller and back portion served as vestibule or *boudoir* to the two bedrooms. Built-in seats filled the wall space, and in the corner by the patio balustrade stood a round table with one high-backed settee and two straight chairs. The larger and front section of the veranda gave off the drawing-room and served as Barker's business office. Here were ranged in shelves along the walls Zapotec idols and images,

authentic and fake, in jadeite, terra cotta, and native stone. Barker's desk, strewn with papers, was set diagonally across the far corner. A magazine stand with the six latest copies of *Fortune* stood by his high-backed chair. Within reaching distance of his desk was the dial of a radio. A soft grass hammock, where Barker took his siestas, swung invitingly.

With cocktail in hand, I stretched out in the hammock and breathed in the night air, fragrant with the odor of angel trumpets and herbs and something like tea olive. A faint coolness had come with the evening and brought out the odors. One small oil lamp set on a corner of the desk made the gray-green idols against the wall look like weird slabs of bas-relief. Across the sunken palm-shadowed patio was the open dining-room with columns, and the kitchen and the store-room. The dining-room cabinets table were almost obliterated by bales of medicinal grasses to be weighed and graded and exported to a drug firm in New Jersey, where they would be processed into a specific for fever.

Just as I sighed audibly and ostentatiously with content, Barker began bewailing the incapacity of the radio and the lack of news and swing music. "The confounded electric-light plant went out of commission three months ago, and the authorities haven't got it fixed yet. No radio to listen to and no electric light to read by. Nothing to do but go to bed at first dark—and at sixty going to bed isn't what it might be." He laughed the laugh that accompanies such a remark, and reached over and viciously twisted the radio dial in frustrated desire.

I said impolitely: "Thank God for the breakdown of the power plant. I'm enjoying this lamplight and this blessed quietness."

And Myers said: "Peace. It's wonderful."

"Well, I'm relieved," Barker said tactfully. "I thought you fellows would have a fit without the radio. I'd go crazy down here if I didn't hear some English on the radio. No one here speaks anything but Spanish and Zapotec."

"But your family. Your sons and daughters?"

"They don't know two words of English."

"What?" I blurted out. "You haven't taught them English in all these years?"

Barker shrugged in the Mexican way. "They didn't seem much interested. But I am teaching English now three days a week in the Catholic school. Me and all those nuns. They teach the kids manners and discipline, too. I'm no Catholic, understand. It's all a mass of superstition to me. I was raised a Presbyterian. These saints and holy pictures you'll see all over my house belong to my wife and my sister-in-law."

"Your sister-in-law?"

"She's the one coming across the patio now with our supper. She's been with us ever since we were married—over thirty years. She helped raise all five of my children. My wife nursed them at the regular hours when they were babies, but my sister-in-law took care of them. In Mexico, when a woman does not marry, they say the old maid stayed unmarried to dress the saints in the church. My sister-in-law stayed unmarried to dress my kids. Now she cooks and cleans and does whatever is necessary. I don't know what we'd do without her. She's no trouble at all, doesn't even care whether she has a bed. Like most Indians, she can drop down on a blanket and sleep quite contentedly anywhere. My children adore her."

Again I noticed how the sister-in-law was a replica of Señora Barker ten years hence. Their features were almost precisely the same, and apparently they were the same height and the same weight. But

Continued on page 55



Tltec warrior, with standard and shield. From Tula.

Warrior with shield, club and cone helmet. From Colima.

Totonacan warrior, with club. From Ixtán, Yucatán.

(Photos by the author. Courtesy of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the kind co-operation of Mr. Ignacio Bernal, Mr. James Forster, Mr. Manuel Alvarez Bravo, and Mr. James Frissell.)

Warriors of Ancient Mexico

By Fredrick A. Peterson

AS the third in the series of articles dealing with life in ancient Mexico, we present a short summary of one of the most important and esteemed professions: the warrior. We shall deal principally with the warfare of the Mexica tribe of Tenochtitlan, popularly known as the Aztecs, but will present photographs of ancient terra-cotta statuettes of several different cultures of approximately the same epoch.

One of the world's outstanding examples of impressment into military service was the Mexican custom of telling all male children, at the moment of their birth, that they are born as warriors. The attending midwife would make a solemn ritual speech to the little creature, who was just being born, as follows:

"My son, very young, listen today to the doctrine that the Gods Yaltecutli and Yalticatl, your father and mother, left to us. I now cut the cord. Know and understand this is not your house where you have been born, because you are a soldier and a servant. You are a bird, and a soldier of him who is everywhere. This house where you were born is only a nest, an inn where you have arrived, your entrance into this world. This is only your cradle and place to rest your head. Your own land is in another place. You are promised to the field where they make the wars, where they fight battles, and your trade is war. Your obligation is to give the sun the blood of your enemies to drink, and to feed the earth with the bodies of your opponents."

Later, at a baptismal ceremony, among other speeches, the midwife made this little note of dedication: "Oh Great Sun, receive these arms of war, dedicated to thee, with which thou might take pleasure and allow the child, equipped with them, to win at last celestial happiness, conceded to all who fall in

battle and enjoy incredible delights." As she spoke she placed into the hands of the little child, a miniature bow with four arrows, a shield, and the tools of his fathers' trade. And so it was ordained that the child was to dedicate himself to making war, as his most precious gift to the sun.

The child grew up with the idea that if he were to die on the field of battle, he would then be directly transported to the Heaven of the Sun, and would accompany it on its daily rounds, and that after a time he could come back to earth in a different form, perhaps that of a butterfly. He also was given the idea that the Sun and the other deities had given their life's blood to create man, and that it was only fair for man to feed them on the same precious liquid.

The education of the child was domestic until he was about fourteen years old, when the public education, given by the state, began. The matter of public education will be taken up in detail in another article, in which the matter of the Calmecac and Telpuchcalli will be discussed. One of these schools, the Telpuchcalli, submitted the boys to Spartan discipline. In this school the boys slept on the floor, got up at sunrise, worked continuously, and received rough punishment for minor lapses of discipline. The idea was, of course, to strengthen the character of the boy and, on the other hand, make him amenable to receiving military orders from his superiors, in the future.

War was taught in a practical way, and the young men were taken out on lengthy maneuvers over rugged terrain, and taught, at first-hand, how to resist hunger, thirst, fatigue, cold and rain. The young pupils even went to battle behind the regular warriors, to observe their teachers, and see for themselves the practical applications of their daily lessons.

The older boys, if they had shown warlike valor, were allowed to meet the enemy face-to-face, aided



Warrior with shield and club.
From Colima.

by their teachers, and if a boy captured an enemy warrior he was greatly honored. If, during the course of his career as a warrior, a boy managed to capture three prisoners he was eligible to become a "maestro" in the Telpuchcalli school.

In time of peace the arms were stored in royal arsenals, near the main temple, on whose doors were nailed a bow and two quivers. Some arms were also kept in the Telpuchcalli, and the nobility were allowed to keep weapons in their own houses.

The principal arms were as follows: The Bow and Arrow was very popular, and the arrows were usually tipped with obsidian, flint, (or other stone), fish-spine or wooden barb that spread as it entered the flesh. The Atlatl, or spear-thrower, was used to propel small darts, and was a most efficient weapon. When it wasn't used for warfare, it was used to hunt deer and ducks. The Maquauhuitl was a kind of sword-club, which had obsidian blades stuck in grooves along the edge, and was a terrible weapon. Cortés related how, with one blow, a soldier armed with

Zapotec Warrior, with shield
and staff. From Oaxaca.



a Maquauhuitl, cut off the head of a horse. The Maquauhuitl was carried in the hand, and was attached with a cord to the wrist. Slings, with appropriate stones, were used in the first stages of battle. Macanas, or clubs, were made of strong and heavy wood, and were often elaborately carved. Spears were of varying lengths, and were tipped with obsidian, flint, fishspine, or hard-wood barb. Bernal Diaz tells us how the natives of Oaxaca used spears over fifteen feet long against the Spaniards.

They had Shields made of wood, leather, or cane. These were usually laced with thick cotton covering, and entirely bedecked with brilliantly colored feathers. They were usually round, but some were rectangular. Some were fairly small, used in dances and by expert warriors, while others covered the whole body. Nobles used shields with golden rims, and decorated with red, blue-green, and yellow plumage, having tassels and fringes of feathers dangling from the bottom edge. It is related that the Coastal tribes used shells of large sea turtles, which they rimmed with copper or gold.

They had very efficient Armour, consisting of thick cotton padding, which had been soaked many times in brine-water, and allowed to dry. It was so comfortable and missile-resistant, that the Spanish soon adopted it, in place of their heavy iron armour. The newcomers to battle, the novices, wore nothing but a short loin-cloth, but often faked clothing by painting it on. The more prisoners they captured, the more clothes were they allowed to wear, as insignia and as a great honor. It is said that the bravest and strongest soldiers wore nothing but a heavy coating of black paint on the battlefield, and that everyone stayed away from them because of their awesome reputations.

Helmets were made of combinations of wood, reed, feathers, paper, cloth and animal skins. They were often made in ferocious effigy form to resemble the head of an eagle, tiger, snake, or wolf, with the head of the warrior peering out from behind the teeth, to cause maximum terror. One witness relates that it "seemed like it was going to vomit the soldier." The helmets also were a kind of badge of nobility and proved membership in various organizations, such as the Eagle or Jaguar Knights. (Caballero Aguila).

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Maya Warrior, with shield and armour.
From Island of Yucatan.





Water Color.

By Alfred C. Ybarra.

The Plateresque in Mexican Architecture

By Trent Elwood Sanford

THE DAWN of the sixteenth century was a period of great moment for Spain. Ferdinand and Isabella had succeeded in driving the Moors from their final European stronghold of Granada. In the northern city of Greñt a grandson, Charles, was born. Voyages of exploration far to the west had begun to open up an era of wealth and power yet undreamed of in its potentialities. And a revolution in architecture had crossed the short expanse of the western Mediterranean from near-by Italy and was spreading over the Iberian peninsula, united for the first time in its history.

Though somewhat isolated from the rest of Europe, Spain had long been influenced by neighbor countries both in Europe and in Africa, as she had long been the prey of foreign conquerors from all around the Mediterranean. Like her later problem child, Mexico, a disordered distribution of mountain ranges within, together with stretches of barren plateau, separated the fertile valleys and divided the inhabitants of the country into constantly hostile and mutually suspicious groups, and long had stood in the way of unity.

From the time of the Celts and the Iberians, the Phoenicians and the Greeks, the Carthaginians and the Romans, and later the Visigoths the history of the country had been turbulent. And after that tragic year of 711, when the Moors from North Africa invaded the peninsula and drove the Christian Visigoths beyond the Cantabrian mountains, political and religious anarchy continued to prevail. All this is reflected in the architecture of that peninsular battleground. From the aqueducts and bridges of the Romans and the mosques and palaces of the Moham-

medans to the Romanesque churches and monasteries from Italy and from France, and later the Gothic cathedrals from France and even Germany, the country had shown a confusion of styles that only later unity (and an artistic revolution) could cast into an architectural melting pot.

What with the Mohammedan architecture, the Christian styles influenced by the Mohammedans, and the various phases of Romanesque and Gothic, the beginning of the thirteenth century witnessed as many as nine architectural styles in vogue at the same time. The germs, both Christian and Moorish, which in the next two hundred years were to flower and combine to help make Spanish and Mexican architecture, had already begun to sprout.

Architecturally, the invasion by the Moors had brought northern Africa, and even Asia, into that projecting corner of Europe. Beginning with the great Mosque of Cordova, the early capital of the caliphs, the Moorish styles culminated in the Alhambra at Granada, capital of the smaller kingdom into which Mohammedans had later been driven. But even that was not the end of African and Asiatic influence. The rich, geometric caprices in plaster and the colorful tiles continued to be imitated, and brought about the style known as Mudéjar. Derived from an Arabic word meaning vassal, the term was applied to the work produced by those Moors who had become subject to the Christians after the reconquest by the latter, or to work done by Christians under such Moorish instruction. The architecture is distinguished by lace-like patterns, and is largely of brick and plaster, though such patterns were applied also to woodwork, such

as ceilings and door panels; while there were often wainscoting of colored, glazed tiles. Blended first with the Romanesque and lasting for several hundred years, it influenced both the Gothic and the Renaissance to help produce that style, peculiarly Spanish, known as Plateresque. We shall find both the Plateresque and the Mudéjar which contributed to it when we return to Mexico; and it is the Mudéjar style which, long outlasting its wayward child, is responsible for the beautiful tilework there.

When in the north and on the Mediterranean seaboard, the Romanesque was brought into Spain from France and from Italy, the massiveness of the structures and meagre fenestration of that style fitted well both the Christian Spanish temperament and that country's blazing sun. Even when the developed "balance" of Gothic architecture with its high, slender piers to take the concentrated weight of rib-vaulted ceilings and its flying buttresses to resist their outward thrust, was reluctantly accepted, and when Gothic churches replaced earlier Romanesque structures, the new fashion was largely confined to the church itself; the earlier cloisters were permitted to remain; and the influence of both styles continued for a long time in the monastic establishment. Hence Romanesque cloisters attached to massive walled Gothic monastic churches in sixteenth-century Mexico!

One feature of the earliest Romanesque churches in Spain had a profound influence on all subsequent Spanish church architecture, and gave rise to its most distinguishing (and disfiguring) characteristic. These churches were built with nave and aisles of almost equal height, leaving no space for a triforium or a clerestory, and terminating in parallel apses abutting directly on the transepts. The result was the complete absence of a choir. The central apse was regarded as a sanctuary and there was nothing to do but place the choir in the nave, beyond the crossing. This arrangement led to the splendid bronze and wrought-iron grilles called "rejas" used to enclose the "capilla mayor" and the "coro," but served to interfere with the general architectural ensemble and destroy the impressive vistas to be found in cathedrals of the more northerly countries. The arrangement was continued throughout the Romanesque and Gothic periods in Spain, and even in the great cathedrals of the Renaissance, not only in Spain but in Mexico.

When Christian Spain finally accepted the Gothic through further influence from more progressive France, it was manifested chiefly in the cathedrals of the great cities, and in them she produced some of the finest examples of the style. She soared to true heights in the Seville Cathedral, largest of all the Gothic cathedrals and one of the noblest structures produced by man; and in the Cathedral of Segovia, built as late as the sixteenth century, she made a great and vigorous protest against that new Architectural revolution, the Renaissance. Its tierne vaulting can be seen, in simplified form, in a number of early mission churches of Mexico. The cathedral was not completed until after the final stones had been placed in the dreary gray granite Escorial of the High Renaissance—evidence enough of individualism in rugged and spirited, though turbulent Spain. Spain brought the Gothic to a close in Europe; and the Cathedral of Segovia was the last of the Gothic in Spain.

All through that later Romanesque and Gothic period the Moorish kings were living in and adding to their fanciful palace of the Alhambra at Granada; and as its splendor grew, the Spanish kings continued, more and more, to raid and loot the Moorish kingdom, until, finally, with a confidence born of the successes that had produced the great cathedrals, the Christian Spaniards stormed the Moorish capital. One morning in January of 1492, the crescents were flung

from the minarets of the city, a massive silver cross and the royal banners bearing the arms of Aragon and Castile were planted on the Watch Tower of the Alhambra, and Ferdinand and Isabella solemnly entered the palace.

The following summer Christopher Columbus, obsessed with an idea and armed with a letter of credentials to the great khan who was thought to rule the other side of the world, set sail from the little Spanish port of Palos out onto the unknown Atlantic.

* * *

Though the Cathedral of Segovia stood high up on its hill as mute but eloquent evidence of the last of the Gothic, and although the stubborn and conservative Church continued to build somewhat lesser structures with elements of that style, most of Spain had, by the turn of the century, succumbed to the pressure, from without, of the Renaissance, and in so doing had developed a style of architectural decoration rather peculiarly its own. It was definitely a style of architectural decoration, surface ornament, rather than anything original in structural architecture. This style became known as Plateresque because of the resemblance to the work of the silversmith (platero); but whether the architecture was influenced by the silverwork of the period or whether the silver designs were derived from the contemporary architecture will probably be argued ad infinitum. The beginnings of such surface ornamentation on buildings before the discovery of America and consequent riches would seem to point to architecture as the parent, in spite of the derision directed against it by the cold classicists of a later period who, as a term of reproach, gave the style its name.

The influences which brought it about and contributed to its development were several. Moorish taste in decoration and that of the derivative Mudéjar played an important part. The developed Gothic ornament had much to do with it and so did that of the incoming Renaissance from Italy. And last, but not least, contact with the New World, the discovery and exploitation of which had contributed greatly to making Spain a first-rate European power, and the resulting influx of wealth in the form of silver and gold made possible an increased indulgence in elaboration such as Spain had hitherto been unable to afford. This found an outlet in both elaborate objects made of these metals, particularly for the Church—processional crosses, reliquaries, and even miniature temples—and in increased elaboration of architectural details. Hence the connection; and the name.

It was the combination in varying degrees of the three style involved that brought about the Plateresque; and, in its development, America paid the bills. The result is not as complex as it sounds. Take a bit of Gothic, stir it up with a cup of Renaissance, put in two tablespoonfuls of Mudéjar, and there you have it. There were no fixed proportions in the recipe, however. Each chef mixed the ingredients according to his own taste. A strictly Renaissance saint can stand under a Gothic canopy beside a Moorish arch and the blend is Plateresque. Or a Gothic finial can rise triumphant over a Moorish stalactite cornice while Renaissance cherubs play merrily about among the candelabral below and the result is also Plateresque. Given the right ingredients and a little ingenuity and judgment, anybody could whip it up. However, it took Mexico to add the sun and the moon along with a few extra fruits and vegetables.

But there is one thing to remember. Although Spanish architects seemed to have suffered a decline in their constructive ability, due, perhaps, to a soft-

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Don Amilcar

By Dane Chandos

THE SERVANTS on the whole enjoyed the influx of guests, and Cayetano peppered his talk with references to the Señor Professor, the Señor Doctor, and the Señor Engineer, for in Mexico Engineer is used before surnames just like Doctor or Professor.

"All titled persons," said Cayetano and wore his best shoes constantly.

Candelaria got on with the men, but she thought little of the women guests.

"The señora of the doctor is forever putting herself into my kitchen and into everything, because she says she is very exigent about cleaning, which she calls hygiene and which she says is because of the children. As if one needed children to know about cleaning. Look, señor, at my table, my counter, my stove! Look, if you wish, at my floor! And if the rubbish box is full, it is because five times I have told that Cayetano to empty it and he goes on filling his little salters and pepperers for his tables. And what am I to do about the meat, which I was going to stuff with sardines? The more ancient señora has eaten three tins of sardines each day since she came, and it is for you to know if that is well, with sardines at two pesos a tin, and if I use them for the meat what will she do after tomorrow for there are only four tins left?"

I promised to tell the doctor's wife that Candelaria's work was very clean—which it is—and to send for more sardines. Just then there passed through the patio into the huerta a procession of two women and a straggle of children, all bearing pots and plates and a wrapped napkin that obviously held a pile of tortillas.

"Oh, they're taking them to Don Amilcar."

"Whatever is that?" I asked.

"Don Amilcar? But is he down the huerta?"

"Oh, yes."

"But why?"

"You'd better ask that Cayetano. He let him in."

Don Amilcar is one of our butchers, and I could not imagine why he should suddenly want to have a picnic in my huerta. I found Cayetano.

"Pos, it's like this," he said. "You see, Don Amilcar bought some steers recently for slaughter, and he paid a good price for them, and he killed them. We bought meat from all three. And then it resulted that the steers he had bought were stolen ones and the owner from whom they were stolen went to the police, and the man who stole them and sold them to Don Amilcar has disappeared, and until the whole thing is cleared up by the judge, Don Amilcar, though he has acted without wishing to deceive, is liable to be arrested. So he was unable to stay in his own house and had to hide, and here he is hiding."

Cayetano finished with a pleased smile, having explained everything.

"But surely everybody knows he is here," I said, for Don Amilcar's family had brought food without any attempt at concealment, and anyway Ajijie is Ajijie.

"How not," said Cayetano. "It is certain that yes. The soldiers from Chapala came this morning



Water Color.

By Myrtle Frankovits.

to look for him, and perhaps they knew too, for they looked in many houses but not here, and just now they are bathing right in front of the house."

I went to talk to Don Amilcar, who had established himself with a straw mat and a sarape, in a lean-to beyond the chicken run. He was eating while his family set round in silence, watching him.

Yes, everything was just as Cayetano had said. He did not wish to molest me in any way, and could stay quietly in the lean-to.

"How long d'you think you'll have to hide?"

"Oh, not for long, señor. In a few days, two or ten, or maybe less, it will be cleared up."

"If they do come looking for you," I said, "I shan't know you're here. I can't obstruct the law, especially since I'm a foreigner."

"That was why Cayetano did not want me to come to you and ask your permission. In order that you need not know I am here."

He stayed on down in the huerta, which was now aglow with early oranges. The doctor's children picked them, leaving skins and seeds strewn everywhere, in the flowerpots, in chairs in the toilets. They and their father got tanned, "like redskins," said their mother, who protected her own skin, thickly made up, with a big floppy hat, for in Mexico to be "very white" is a distinction, removing you beyond the suspicion of Indian blood. As for the two old ladies, they remained pasty and passive. The younger old lady always spent the morning pottering on the veranda of their bungalow, wearing a white underbodice and a bright one petticoat, and when she got around to putting on her dress, she put it on right there on the veranda. The other old lady went to Mass whenever there was Mass to go to and lived on sardines and tea.

• • •

Rendel Westcott came back.

He had been a painter for forty years. He had wandered about the world and had a flair for new places. He had been among the first at St. Tropez;

long before 1544 he had been in Capri; he had been at raos in the early days. Later he had come to Chapala, but he also owned an adobe cottage on a small piece of land in Ajijie, where he often came to give parties and to paint. He had changed his style with the times and always managed to hit upon the popular version of each style. The young painters of Chapala, some of whom followed Mondrian and some of followed Dali and some of whom secretly followed Westcott himself and some of whom, horrified of following anybody, were determined to be original even if it killed them, said his pictures weren't painted but dished up.

"If only I could put just a little parsly garnishing on that pink horse of his, why, you could eat it," said Nadeen Braze, who wore a tower of red hair and painted her mouth askew, and whose own work surely have been indigestible. "Yes, eat it," she repeated, draining Rendel's drink.

I think Rendel knew the sort of thing that was said about him and didn't give a damn. His own style, in so far as he had one, imbued everyone and everything with glamour and was as slick as coachwork. He had been very successful, and apart from that, although he talked a lot about the evils of inherited wealth, he enjoyed a considerable income from a nice fat trust fund.

"Of course he's been successful," said one of his friends, who was doing something quite new in pointillist surrealism. "Why, he could put sex into a lima bean."

Rendel is a big burly man of about sixty with the energy of about ten ordinary people, and when he laughs the lake quivers and the mountains shake. He is voraciously sociable and loves to make people talk politics, always telling them how his own political road is a footpath all along the left-hand side of the Roosevelt Highway, though he has confessed to me after a few drinks that he usually votes Republican. He entertains incessantly, that is, any time after noon, when he gets up, but when he wants to go and paint, he just goes and paints, leaving his guests free on the terrace and bar. Each sort of person who visits him dislikes the other sorts and complains that he is unselective. He usually has several people staying in the house, whose surnames one rarely learns, and who blow in and out with the inconsequence, of butterflies on the wind. Everything is tremendously casual, and dinner happens anywhere between four in the afternoon and midnight. The Indios understand this much better than a strict routine such as the Fountanneys'.

This time Rendel brought with him a Lady Connemara, daughter of some famous Southern family and widow of some obscure Irish peer. She was fashionably dressed in an unsmart way, overwhelmingly self-assured, obviously well-heeled, and, in spite of her unpractical background of magnolias and bogs, she gave one the impression of being anything but feeble. He brought her round to call and gave us a hilarious account of the trip he had made to Guanajuato.

Now Guanajuato is famed for houses hanging on the sides of a gorge, with streets at the roof level of the houses in the streets below, and also for its mummies, produced by a natural process in a short time after burial. A number of these are on show and many have preserved not only a human aspect but also lifelike articulation of the members.

"The guide opened the mummy's mouth and pulled out her tongue, and she looked exactly like my aunt Bella," boomed Rendel, his last words already roaring with his mirth. And then his laughter, starting somewhere in the upper register and rolling down like waves of the sea, engulfed us all. Sometimes I think one never hears the point of Rendel's stories because he always starts laughing at them himself before they are over. None of the people present knew his aunt Bella, but as Rendel's prodigious laughter rolled and roared, everybody started to laugh too. He gave a terrific burp, slapped his thigh, and laughed all over again from soprano to bass.

"Goodness," he said suddenly, "I've got those people from Guadalajara coming to dinner. I'd quite forgotten, and they must be there by now. Whatever is their name, Denise?"

But Lady Connemara didn't know either, and she and Rendel hurried away. She came to call the next morning, and she asked me what percentage I would give her on any guests she might bring to stay with me. Unhappily we were not able to reach any agreement, and she told everyone she knew to stay in Chapala. Nevertheless, she continued to call. She talked to the Fountanneys, nodded curtly to Mr. Humpel, and took no notice at all of my Mexican guests.

She often came to shop in Ajijie because, she said, it was cheaper than Chapala, and I met her one morning in the main street carrying a cut of liver in one hand and a morocco bag in the other.

"By the way," she drawled, "I have found out that you could get your bottled lemonades for thirteen centavos up at that little shop at the entrance to the village. I suppose you are paying eighteen at Arcelia's since I know you are charging the Fountanneys twenty. It's a little further from you, of course, but think what a saving."

That evening Cayetano came to me and said, "Says Doña Arcelia, that they have told her that the foreign señora, who is at the house of Señor Westcott, and who they say is a condesa or duquesa, is relating everywhere that Doña Arcelia charges you too much for lemonades. And Arcelia says that you know this is not so, for she charges you only sixteen centavos, though it is true that other people pay eighteen. And it gives her much pain in case that you should think she is not fair, and she has just received a big cheese from the señor who sometimes brings cheeses, and it does not shine and is dry and good to grate, and to you it is five pesos a kilo, should you wish to buy."



Notions About Mexico

By Herbert Joseph Mangham

I could never understand why the dimwitted have to make a special pet of Mexico. The country is our near neighbor; one of the first things we learn in second-grade geography is that the United States is bounded on the east by the Atlantic, on the north by Canada, on the west by the Pacific, and on the south by Mexico. The two countries have had violent spats and well-oiled friendship pacts. Our ties have always been close and are becoming continuously closer with the increase in international commerce, cultural exchange, immigration in both directions, and tourism. Yet these people persist in a vagueness that is as uncomplimentary to themselves as it is to our neighbors.

Many times when I have said I was going to, or coming from, Mexico, somebody present has assumed a look of intelligent interest and inquired, "New Mexico?" The question gets sillier and sillier as you ponder it. Nobody in all history has ever referred to New Mexico as "Mexico." Then why should anyone have to differentiate by describing Mexico as "Old"? Yet a number of letters go south inscribed "Old Mexico." When a person goes to England, nobody ever pops up with the question, "New England or Old England?" People do not have to distinguish between New York and Old York, New Hampshire and Old Hampshire. Anyone could be permitted some confusion over Guinea and New Guinea, but Mexico and New Mexico are hardly in that remote class.

It is easier to overlook their ignorance of the states of Mexico, of which there are 28, for it is general. Yet, as the letters down there are addressed exactly as here—name, street, town, state, and country, a person of moderate intelligence should be able to analyze an inscription. But the dimwits prefer to ignore the name of the state, and the letter goes to "Tuxpan, Mexico," which is comparable to addressing a letter "Canton, USA." As there are at least five Tuxpans, the letter stands an 80 per cent chance of non-delivery.

Their confusion over double and triple names is pardonable—such as Santiago Tepetlapa; one has to know that so many towns are named after certain saints and heroes that another name is added to distinguish them. Even editors, who know everything, sometimes try to improve copy by inserting a comma in names like San Andrés Tuxtla, making a "San Andrés," of which there are at least a hundred, and a "Tuxtla," which is no place at all.

"What language do they speak down there?" ask the dimwits, and perhaps add hopefully, "English?", implying that if they don't, they ought to. It might be Latin. Mexico is a part of Latin-America, you know.

These people will memorize a few basic words of French or German when they go to Europe; but when they go south, they seem to think that if they repeat a question in English in increasingly louder tones, the native will eventually understand them. Curiously, the native often does, as the questions tend to follow patterns that even an illiterate and unwashed aborigine learns to recognize. Spanish is about the easiest of all languages to pronounce. Twenty min-



Water Color.

By Clara Thorward.

utes concentration on the rules of pronunciation will obviate such common touristisms as the rasping short "a" in "Ta-a-a-xco" and the final "a", as in Puebla, that is so often pronounced "uh" instead of "ah."

They go unprepared in other ways. Previous voyages may have familiarized them with the red tape and due processes of law in all Europe and Asia, but they approach the border without a shred of identification. Then they try to apply pressure with bluster, specious argument, a blast of charm, or pretty tears, until perhaps a harried clerk will give them a tourist permit to get shed of their bad manners.

The fact that Mexico City is the hemisphere's highest capital, at 7400 feet, has been printed thousands of times. Photographs of snow-capped Popocatepetl (they insistently accent the "cat" instead of the "tep"), Ixtaccihuatl and Orizaba are almost as common as those of Fujiyama. Yet the naive go to Mexico City even in December in gauze-weight clothing, touchingly confident of encountering tropic heat.

They go in all months looking for Spanish dons, señoritas with over-size combs draped with mantillas, balcony serenades, Spanish dancers, and the other Hispanicisms romantically associated with Seville and "Carmen." The blood of Mexico is 75 per cent Indian, and it is that kind of a country. True, Spanish dancers can be seen in the night clubs, precisely as in New York and Chicago. When these naive pilgrims happen on the authentic native fiestas with their touchingly picturesque home-made costumes and their complete indifference to tourist desires and schedules, they suffer a dwefful disillusionment.

Finally, there is the pregnant subject of money. These people cross the border still talking of dollars and cents instead of pesos and centavos. Nobody ever refers to francs as "French dollars," marks as "German dollars," or pounds as "English dollars;" but some people are apparently unable to comprehend pesos unless they think of them as "Mexican dollars." Practically everything in Mexico that isn't imported from USA is appreciably cheaper than in the United States, yet a handful of tourists always come home hysterical about the high prices down there. They are delighted to receive eight and a half "Mexican dollars" for one American dollar, but when they have

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Patterns of an Old City

OUT OF THE HIATUS

By Howard S. Phillips

THE RAIN started with a sudden crash. It came down in a torrent, pounding heavily on the windowpanes, casting the room into darkness; then, after a while, the repeated thunder sundered the clouds, and it settled into a drizzle that would last through the rest of the afternoon.

Propped over the pillows in her bed, behind the closed doors of her secluded third-floor chamber, Doña Laura was undisturbed by the roar of thunder or flash of lightning. She sensed the rain without being actually aware of it; her knitting needles moving automatically in her twiglike hands, her mind, meandering tranquilly through intervening lapses of total blankness over scattered recollections, her eyes peering fixedly at the needlepoints, looping the knots unerringly without actually counting them or seeing what she was doing.

And yet it was not a total tranquillity. Dimly, in occasional spurts of cognition, she sensed that she was confronting a problem, that she was deeply concerned over something, that her help was badly needed by someone, that she must find a way out of a perilous situation; but these flashes of awareness were deleted in periods of total void, in spells of wakeful slumber, making sustained remembrance or comprehension impossible.

And then she heard the creak of the door and saw her granddaughter coming into the room, and watched her as she uncorked a bottle and poured the medicine into a glass, and said something in reply to a remark she made, and obediently swallowed the sweetly substance. And it was when she was left alone again that her mind definitely emerged from the hiatus. The sense of peril became transformed into full understanding; her thoughts assumed a sudden sharpness and became audible with menace like flapping wings.

• • •

She perceived that her worry had to do with her granddaughter, and thinking about her saw her own image through the haze of many years, when she herself was a young woman, and surmised that in some strange way the image of the two was the same. At the end of sixty years life in some incongruous manner seemed to be repeating itself, and now it was her own granddaughter that was at the brink of the same pitfall, that was confronting the same grave peril, that was about to commit the same dreadful error that had made so much of her own life an ordeal of endless turmoil and pain.

She had gathered this in the preceding months, perceived it without being told, almost by pure intuition, sensed it acutely during the moments of sharp lucidity; though it was not till this moment that she understood its full significance and sensed its full horror.

• • •

She met Ricardo at one of the formal balls which were in vogue when she was a girl, and she was intrigued by his boldness in crossing off three numbers in her program. And though she sought to appear cool and reserved, as they danced she felt strangely exhilarated by his nearness, by the supple strength of his arm, by the assurance of his guiding step, and

by the words he spoke. It frightened and confused her. She did not think that she had really fallen in love, and yet through the subsequent days he was constantly in her mind, and when at last she saw him again she instantly knew that that was what she had fervently hoped for. She also knew that she was behaving badly, for she had already been promised to Fausto, a distant cousin whom her parents had selected as a quite eligible match.

Through the rainy dusk she now saw Ricardo, as she beheld him through her window on that bright Sunday morning, pacing up and down the street in front of their house, and recalled how her heart missed a beat when a few minutes later he approached their carriage and greeted them bowing and lifting his hat as she and her parents were starting for church. His demeanor was that of utter casualness; he only said good morning, but the words implied a crucial message. He came to look for her, and she knew that he would return again.

It was a fine big house they lived in, with many unused rooms, a front and rear patio and two pairs of perfectly matched horses in the stable. The facade, with its ornamental iron-grilled windows and a zagüan of massive, panelled oak brass-studded doors, bore a stately and forbidding air. It was the kind of house that bespoke stability, peace and well-being, that aroused envy and respect. No one would indeed suspect that life inside its walls could ever deviate from a course of rigid respectability, that it could become distorted into tragedy and grief, that it could become cruel, sordid and ugly.

So there was Fausto back from a journey to Europe, now in full possession of his family estate a mild-natured and gentle-mannered young man in his early thirties who was ready to marry and settle down and who could give her the kind of life and surroundings she had enjoyed from birth. And while she had been chosen for him by their families and her will had been hardly considered in the case, he gladly accepted this choice, for in his mild and gentle-mannered way he actually loved her.

She had grown accustomed to think of Fausto as her future husband, and she found comfort in this thought; but now instead of comfort it brought her confusion and dread. And yet, despite this dread, the thought persisted. Her emotional surrender to Ricardo—the secret meetings, the wakeful nights, the torment of longing—were an escapade, something which she felt would pass with time. It was an accident, a kind of temporary madness from which she would presently recover; she would retrieve her sanity and marry Fausto in the end, for that was obviously the proper and sensible thing to do.

And that would have been well had Ricardo been willing to accept the role she had assigned to him, had he been willing to play the part of a mere partner in a passing escapade. But he demanded more. He loved her, and he desired her, and he was unwilling to share her with someone else. Thus there was burning jealousy, the ambivalence of love and hate, the succession of bitter quarrels and fervent reconciliations, and continued confusion and dread.

She lived through a year of incessant torment, while Fausto, the gentle, the patient, the ever forgiving, quietly sharing in this torment, waited, trusting time to provide a way out. She was not actually a

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On.

By Fidel Figueroa.

The Tequila Twins

By Kim Schee

DON Manuel, the owner of the Estrella Cantina, and I were discussing human capacity for alcoholic beverages. I cited a case of a friend of mine who religiously downed a bottle of Scotch every day over a period of years and at the age of fifty was still hale and hearty. My story, however, did not impress Don Manuel in the least.

"Señor," he said. "I have been in the cantina business for twenty years and I have witnessed many a phenomenon but never anything to compare with the Tequila Twins. I presume that you know them by reputation?"

"I have never heard of the Tequila Twins," I said.

"That, Señor," replied Don Manuel, "is incredible in itself. The Tequila Twins are famous in this part of Mexico. There isn't a cantinero from here to Acapulco that does not know them personally."

"But with your indulgence, I will tell you about them."

He set me up to a drink and proceeded.

"Two years ago about this time I was alone in the cantina taking inventory of my stock. I had already locked the outside doors for it was very late, when suddenly there came a loud knocking. I thought at the time that it was the shameless Pepe, who had been here earlier in the evening and who was always in the habit of returning to the cantina when in his cups, so I went out to give him a good cursing and a kick in the pants if necessary. I opened the door and to my great surprise there stood two fat middle-aged women dressed identically alike and wearing be-

rets. They were obviously gringas, and though I hardly speak any English I understand quite a good deal.

"What they wanted was a drink, so I escorted them into the cantina and they sat up at the bar and ordered two tequilas. I served the tequilas and tried to converse with them in Spanish, but the only word they seemed to know was tequila, so I went ahead with my inventory, keeping my ears alert to anything they might say. But they only exchanged a few words, and they were so thick I couldn't understand them. In about an hour they consumed ten straight tequilas apiece and they both looked as if they might easily fall over backwards. I began to get worried, so I suggested as tactfully as possible that it was very late and that I must close the cantina. They took the hint good-naturedly, paid me and managed to get off those high stools without losing their balance, which was a miracle in itself. Just as I was leaving the bar to open the door, one of them clutched my arm and said she'd forgotten the real reason why she had come. She wanted six bottles of tequila, and when I said something about six bottles being a lot of tequila for two women, she said that six bottles was their daily ration and that she would buy six bottles from me every day on account of my being so simpático. Francamente Señor, I thought they were just another couple of gringas on a spree and never expected to see them again. Anyway, whoever heard of two women drinking six bottles of tequila a day!

"Buena, Señor. I didn't see the Tequila Twins for another week, but every day they sent their mozo down to the cantina to buy six bottles of tequila and

a bottle of Habanero for anyone who might want another kind of a drink. I asked the mozo if the gringas actually consumed six bottles of tequila each day, and he assured me that they not only consumed six bottles of tequila but a dozen bottles of soda water and two dozen lemons. The cook and himself, he said, spent the whole day mixing tequila lemonades and when they wanted food which was very seldom, they ordered it from a restaurant. I asked him what their names were and he said he didn't know but that all the village folk referred to them as the Tequila Twins, and they were living in the Casa Guisado which, as you know, means 'stewed' in English and seemed very appropriate indeed.

"One day, as I was taking my afternoon promenade, I met Señorita Paz sitting on a bench, and to my great surprise she was very intoxicated. Señor, you could have knocked me over with a feather. As you probably know, Señorita Paz is the Spanish teacher in the village, and never touches a drop. For years she has been speechmaking about the evils of drink, but fortunately for us cantineros no one pays the slightest attention to her.

"Pues, Señor, when I met Señorita Paz in this condition, I was naturally very much embarrassed, so I politely tipped my sombrero as if nothing had happened and started to stroll on. But Señorita Paz did not wish me to go and took hold of my arm and pulled me down beside her. Now such an action means nothing to you, Señor, because you are a gringo, but in Mexico it is not only foolish but dangerous. I realize, that Señorita Paz is as thin as a match and as ugly as a she-goat, but had my wife seen me at that moment there would have been a terrible scandal, for even though my wife isn't too fond of me she is very jealous and evil-tempered and loves nothing better than to make a scandal in public. However, I soon discovered that Señorita Paz had no intention of seducing me. As a matter of fact, she was bursting to tell me about the Tequila Twins and since I myself was curious I threw discretion to the winds and encouraged her.

"Don Manuel," she went on to tell me, "I'm a changed woman because I am a happy woman. For the past month I have been employed by two gringas known as the Tequila Twins. I confess I have taught them no Spanish but I have been taught the advantages of drink. Each day I give them a lesson and I return to my home in this condition. But I do not regret it. In spite of a few headaches I no longer suffer from insomnia, my neighbors no longer irritate me, and there is always a song in my heart. Si, Señor, life is very beautiful, and I shall always ask God to bless the Tequila Twins in my prayers!"

• • •

"And with this, Señor, Señorita Paz literally bounced up from the bench where we were sitting and walked lightly down the street.

"Bueno, Señor. I decided right then and there that I would do a bit of investigating on my own. Whoever could put a song in the heart of Señorita Paz deserved investigating. So the next time the mozo came to the cantina for the tequila, I gave him a peso and told him I would deliver it in person, which I did.

"When I arrived at their casa they didn't seem the least bit surprised. Apparently they had forgot-

ten all about the mozo and took it for granted that the tequila would get there some way. Anyhow, they gave me a cheerful welcome and led me out to the veranda. On the veranda were sitting a half-dozen "sin verguenzas" that I had seen at one time or another in the village and the three worst drunkards, including Pepe. All, of course, were loaded with drink, but I must say they behaved very well and seemed to be having a wonderful time. After I had consumed a few tequila highballs, I found myself speaking enough English to stimulate the Tequila Twins in conversation. I soon learned that they had come to Mexico for a purpose, and that purpose was to drink themselves to death. Before leaving the United States, they had even gone so far as to consult a recognized doctor as to the quantity of liquor necessary to kill them. According to their calculations, plus the opinion of their doctor, three bottles of tequila apiece every day for six months would do the trick. When I asked them why they wished to die, one said she had an incurable liver disease and the other it seems had incurable domestic troubles.

"Bueno, I stayed on for some time after all the other guests had left and about every two minutes the cook or the mozo would bring each one of us a fresh drink until I completely lost my power of speech and when I got up from my chair to leave I discovered that I could not walk. The Tequila Twins sensed my predicament immediately and practically carried me into a large bedroom and put me to bed. When I awoke several hours later there were the Tequila Twins with a large bowl of menudo, a concoction which all true Mexicans use for a hangover. Under the circumstances I felt humiliated and began to make apologies, but the Tequila Twins made me feel that what I had done was perfectly natural and told me I could stay in their casa as long as I wished, drunk or sober.

"From that time on, Señor, I became a bosom friend of the Tequila Twins and I must confess I've never enjoyed life more. We used to do crazy things like jumping in the car and going to Mexico City at three o'clock in the morning for a taste of real ham and eggs, or driving down to Acapulco just for a dip in the ocean. It was really the only time and probably the last time in my life that I felt young and carefree. Ay Señor, how well I understand the song in poor old Señorita Paz's heart. She too misses them like the very devil."

"Then they did die," I ventured to say.

"Pues, no, Señor. They left the village one night very suddenly. We all thought that they had gone to Mexico City, perhaps to die in a hospital, but they went back to the United States very much alive."

"But surely," I said, "you must know what's happened to them."

"Si, Señor, I know. The one who suffered from the liver disease was pronounced cured by her doctor, and the husband of the other conveniently died and thus all of her domestic troubles were solved. That's the reason they returned to the States in such a hurry."

"You don't seem to be very happy over their good fortune, Don Manuel."

"Pues, not much, Señor. I understand that neither of them touches a drop of anything any more. By now they are probably just like all the other fat middle-aged gringas. To me that is a great tragedy, Señor. It would have been better had they died."

Magical Marimba

By Peggy Butler

FROM time immemorial, Mexican gods are rain gods. Mexico, though rich in and under soil, is arid.

The southernmost State of Chiapas, stretching along Guatemala and the Pacific breakers, is a coveted Mexican dream; it is rivered.

Chiapas is jungle; stupendous growth, thick, overgrown. Huge ceiba trees rise like the hand of God from the soft-footed blackness. Giant fireflies gather by night in clusters; monkeys, jaguars, snakes. Chiapas is highlands; a profusion of amber, textile dyes, tanning and medicinal herbs, copal incense, and the grandeur of the hardwoods. Chiapas is the majestic, iridescent, liberty-loving quetzal. Chiapas is thousands of square miles of jungle highlands, with acres of coffee, cocoa, banana, rubber cultivated by hand like the flower gardens of Xochimilco.

Chiapas is also the marimba.

Born in Chiapas, its origin lost in antiquity, the marimba is so much a part of the Chiapan blood stream it is uncluttered by legend. It is unsung, undocumented, unphotographed. Not even the Encyclopedia Britannica mentions it. An obscure reference book, unavailable in most countries, cites the fact that in the Congo the marimba is made of 16 gourds of different sizes, and in Mexico it is 21 pieces of wood, hardened by fire, to each of which is attached a resonant tube.

Yet it is the mysterious marimba that extends the welcoming handclasp, from every tiny, hidden town, as the three-car train rolls through the Chiapan jungles.

* * *

A marimba in Rijijapan, on the railroad siding near the box car houses, strung with flowers in oil cans. The melody of the marimba playing while the women with towels on their heads (to absorb sweat) sell their mojarra—fish taken from the lagoon—and tortillas big as umbrellas. The marimba lacing the contradictions of naked children smoking cigarettes, firecracker smoke in long black coils and an Indian jumping on the train to talk in his dialect of regional boarding schools exclusively for Indians.

Under a ceiba tree a marimba playing as the train creeps past a school—the seat of learning is a thatched roof on poles. The desks are doodled with machetes. The floor strewn with nourishing sugar cane and jugs of tamarind water. Lorenzo Culbero, the professor,



Oil.

By Doris Rosenthal

leads the thin, ragged students in the national hymn.

"There are 170 children, but only eight generally come. The others ask permission to work in the fincas. Their families have no money. Chiapas is still semi-feudal and we fight for education and agricultural development—without money."

The children learn their three Rs as the jungle marches toward them. Filled with the ghosts of a great buried Maya city, it reveals only a few tombstones, majestic carvings of tigers, eagles and warriors beplumed with quetzal feathers. Yet Jefe Culbero, yellow with malaria, bereft of pupils from the cock-eyed economy born of the feudal system, stays to fight for his deep wish.

* * *

The marimba again, in Tres Picos, whose specialty is tascalate—a marvelous refresco made of toasted corn, cocoa and cinnamon, as Perfecta Gonzalez explains her work. Of the 192 women in the environs, the Senora assembled 75 to demand children's nurseries of the local government. They demand without timidity, in the clear, unembroidered words of those who speak a new language. They have no fear, for they have such a splendid stake; they even sell their gold coin ornaments, their only personal wealth, to help raise the pesos.

"We are firm of purpose," says Grandmother Perfecta, "We have principles." Strange words from a woman who is still illiterate!

Way of the roads—communications are one of Chiapas' primary needs—is Yuxtla-Ch'io, where children are born with machetes in their mouths, the natives' personal sense of justice excludes respect for jails, and cocktails are named "Atomica," "Millionaire," "Cosmopolitan"—again the Mexican paradox. Though in Holy Week the Indians still carry the Virgin through ferocious jungle fog from town to town with lighted candles and the horrible plaint of a flute. The authority in the village is the school teacher. The

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Water Cole.

By Hugh van Sickie Ford.

Human Relations in Technical Cooperation with Latin America

By Maurice Halperin

THERE is a sufficiently large body of experience in the application of North American technological skill and enterprise to the Latin American scene to warrant the conclusion that frequently the chief obstacles to the successful implementation of any given project have not been of a technical nature, in the scientific or engineering sense of the term, but have arisen from problems involving human relations. These are subtle problems even when confined to a single society, but they are far more delicate and complex when it is a question of adjusting the impact of one society on another from which it differs in many important respects.

In the past, these adjustments in human relations have taken place in a random and sometimes costly manner, largely through trial and error based

on expediency. It is only recently, with the advance of knowledge in the field of human relations and with the broadening of the scope and aims of inter-American technical cooperation, that systematic efforts have taken place to understand and cope with the cultural and psychological factors in technical cooperation.

The scope and purpose of technical cooperation inevitably plays a fundamental role in determining the extent to which problems of human relations are recognized and the manner in which they are to be solved. The so-called Point Four Program, representing at this time official United States policy, seems to make it clear that what is envisaged is not a series of unrelated projects, private and public, but a larger plan encompassing both immediate and long-range

mutual interests of the United States and the underdeveloped areas. This plan has been given its clearest and most extensive exposition thus far in a report entitled "Partners in Progress," issued in March, 1951, by the President's International Development Advisory Board, headed by Mr. Nelson Rockefeller. In terms of our present discussion, the following two points in the report, as they apply to the Western Hemisphere, are particularly relevant:

1. In meeting the present international crisis and striving to secure lasting peace and well-being in the Americas, Latin America needs our help and we need theirs. In the words of the report: "The production of the free world today is not sufficient to meet both the human and defense needs of its people... no one nation can do the job alone."

2. To increase production through technical cooperation is only one aspect of the common task. As stated in the report: "Economic development... means a relentless war on disease. It means improved educational opportunities, land and other reforms, where people want them, fair and rising standards, a living wage, full participation in the benefits accruing from increased wealth of income, the removal of discrimination based on race, color, nationality, religious belief, caste or sex... the training in democracy to enable all of the people to take active part in public affairs; to have the right of trial by jury, the right to work, the right to self-organization, to strike, to vote, as well as steady progress toward freedom from want."

The implications are clear and far reaching. The program set forth can be justified only in terms of genuine and compelling mutual interests. Under these circumstances, technical cooperation cannot be envisaged as a form of philanthropy nor, if it is to succeed, can it be converted into a form of exploitation.

The report of the International Development Advisory Board is thus a document of extraordinary significance. It poses the basic problems affecting the relationships between the United States and the underdeveloped areas of the world and provides a consistent theory for the application of a much augmented Point Four Program. Some of the recommendations in the report for the implementation of the theory may well require modification, but it is difficult to see how the theory itself can be rejected without setting Point Four and technical cooperation adrift in an aimless voyage over stormy seas.

For the discussion here, it would appear that the report is an indispensable frame of reference. It is particularly so in attempting to assess the psychological and cultural factors which enter into technical cooperation with Latin America. These factors are now crucial because we are concerned with preparing and guiding an interrelated series of technical projects in multiple fields on a vast scale and with immeasurable social consequences. In the last analysis, we have come to the point where we must reverse our concept of the relationship between the cultural technological components of the problems confronting us. Whereas formerly there has been a tendency to stress technology and to deal with human relations as they affect the application of technology, now it is necessary to stress human relations and evaluate technology in terms of its contribution to human relations.

Within this frame of reference, every familiar problem of cultural and psychological adjustment arising on almost every level of contact takes on a new importance because the criteria for judging the success or failure of adjustment are based on broad objectives. For example, a system of dual wage standards based on color and the practice of racial segregation may, in any given enterprise in any given area and for any given period of time, have little effect on pro-

duction. The resentments which this type of administrative procedure usually arouse may for a certain time be contained by various inexpensive devices, with the result that in terms of the effectiveness of an isolated enterprise and a short-range orientation, this kind of "adjustment" in human relations might be considered successful. However, in terms of the present and much broader objectives of technical cooperation the long-range repercussions of such practices far outweigh other considerations and require the elimination in any sphere of technical cooperation of suspicion of racialism.

We have, in fact, touched upon one of the serious problems in our relations with Latin America, and we must face the problem frankly. We have made great progress in recent years in the field of race relations within the United States, a fact which is not sufficiently known abroad. One reason why this progress is not better known and appreciated abroad, particularly in Latin America, is that not enough of this progress has been exported. The number and variety of North Americans who find themselves for various periods in Latin America have increased measurably in the last few years. The impact of North American culture, transmitted by personal contact, on Latin America is now greater than ever before. The presence among even a small proportion of North Americans of racial attitudes considered obnoxious by Latin Americans, may quantitatively represent an enlargement of the area of friction.

The danger that this friction represents for the future, and its current significance as a factor undermining mutual confidence and effective cooperation, deserve careful attention. The fact remains that the overwhelming majority of people in Latin America are of a greater or lesser degree of Mongoloid or Negroid extraction. In many countries where economic and social progress has been accompanied by a growth in national pride, there is also developing an ethnic pride, and correspondingly, a sensitiveness to any manifestation of an attitude of racial superiority on the part of foreigners.

I have seen this concern for the elimination of racial attitudes stretched to include the term "Latin" as a source of harmful connotations in differentiating between the United States and the other Americas. Not long ago, in Brazil, an industrialist of influence in his country and who now holds high political office, a man who for many years has been active in promoting close relations between Brazil and the United States, told me with great feeling and conviction that it was a mistake for us to use the expression "Latin America." He said that the word Latin, in this context, carried with it overtones of racial and religious distinction between the two major parts of the Western Hemisphere. He proposed Ibero-America as a better term because it eliminated everything except the geographic inference concerning the origin of the European cultures transplanted in most of Middle and South America.

There may or may not be some validity in his view, and in any case a discussion of the propriety of the term "Latin America" would lead us far afield. I have mentioned this incident as an example of how deep and almost painful is the Latin American awareness concerning the importance of a satisfactory adjustment in attitudes toward race relations as an indispensable condition for meaningful and effective inter-American cooperation.

Closely related to the field of race relations, and in a sense encompassing it, is another broad area of sensibility that must be taken into account on every level of technical cooperation. By and large, the Latin American cultures are in various stages of transition from neo-feudal agrarianism to modern indus-

trialism. In this process there is emerging an ever more numerous and articulate urban middle class. In some countries it has achieved significant political influence; in nearly all countries it is beginning to exert pressures which have some reflexion in governmental policy. An important characteristic of the Latin American middle class is its growing sense of nationalism, a feeling which it imparts to other sections of the population. This has been the historic role of the middle class in other parts of the world, and Latin America is no exception.

Nationalism is not new in Latin America. Its roots go back to the earliest struggles for Independence, but its manifestations for many years have been intermittent. Only recently, however, does it appear as a sustained outlook and an ingredient in the culture of the area. In one sense, the new nationalism facilitates the tasks envisaged by the projected enlargement of the Point Four Program. Nationalism provides a sound incentive for large-scale socio-technical progress, and an eagerness to develop capacity to absorb modern techniques. In another sense, nationalism in Latin America makes the task of technical cooperation a more delicate one than it has ever been. Nationalism means a greater pride in native competence, a greater reliance on native ability to determine the kind of technical assistance required and the manner of its adaptation to native conditions and above all, a strong sense of national interest and sovereignty.

The recent consultation of foreign ministers of the American states in Washington provided a good illustration of the extent to which a new articulate Latin American national spirit must be taken into consideration in planning inter-American technical, or more broadly speaking, economic cooperation in the present emergency. It will be recalled that the Latin American republics were unanimous in rejecting a kind of economic cooperation in which they would be committed to increasing production of strategic raw materials without a commitment on the part of the United States to supply the industrial products they needed. They maintained that during World War II they expanded production of essential commodities to meet Allied needs only to suffer serious dislocations when they were unable to obtain the industrial products they required both during and after the war, and when, at the close of the war, the United States drastically cut its purchases of strategic raw materials.

Especially revealing of the Latin American orientation toward these basic issues was the meeting these basic issues was the meeting at which Mr. Charles E. Wilson, United States Defense Mobilization Director, addressed the economic committee of the conference. According to the account in the press (New York Times, April 4, 1951), Mr. Wilson stressed as the primary task of cooperation the building up of military might as swiftly as possible "for the safety of us all." The Latin American delegates, on the other hand, sought a broader interpretation of cooperation which would integrate long-range plans for Latin American development with the program presented by Mr. Wilson.

At one point, Dr. Gustavo Polit, Ecuadorian Minister of Economy, made a concrete suggestion or two as to how this integration might be accomplished. Noting that textile plants in the United States were at present overworked and prices too high, as he put it, he proposed that contracts be allotted to textile plants in Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador to relieve the strain. Then he made similar suggestions with respect to the development of sulphuric acid plants in Ecuador and an expansion of steel production facilities in Bra-

zil, Mexico and Chile in order to meet the needs of emergency defense production.

Whether or not these proposals are sound is perhaps less important than what they reveal of the rapid changes which have taken place in the Latin American mentality, changes which reflect the significant transformation which the cultures of Latin America are undergoing. No wonder Mr. Wilson remarked, on leaving the meeting, that the experience had been a new and "informative" one for him.

By and large, the growth of a sense of national interest and integrity, of national assertiveness and even national destiny in the Latin American republics is probably a greater source of constructive than of obstructive potentialities in the building of an alliance of secure, free, prosperous and mutually self-respecting societies in the Western Hemisphere community of nations—the true objective of technical cooperation. But the constructive potentialities must be recognized and nurtured lest they be frustrated, and in their frustration be transformed into instruments of obstruction.

One of our sister republics, in many respects the most developed and best equipped for technical cooperation, has already fallen victim to the frustration. The government of this country is systematically inculcating an aggressive chauvinism in the minds of the people, and in its foreign relations has turned nationalism into a device for blackmail. At what point, if at any, in our relations with this republic would a greater awareness on our part of its developmental processes have contributed to a happier turn of events in the life of this republic is a matter beyond the scope of this discussion. The fact remains however, that technical cooperation with this important member of the inter-American family, under its present administration, is extremely difficult, if not impossible.

Thus nationalism can be converted into a formidable obstacle to technical cooperation. To say that nationalism is outmoded and inconsistent in an age of inter-dependence among peoples does not solve the problem. Viewed from a world perspective, nationalism appears to be a cultural lag, a survival of values, attitudes and objectives no longer consistent with the advance in methods and capacities of production, distribution and communications. Yet such a perspective should not obscure the fact that the rate of development of peoples has varied greatly and that many societies have only now reached the point where nationalism emerges of a broader social cohesion and purpose.

Cooperation by its very nature suggests mutual give-and-take, yet perhaps the larger burden of adjustment falls on us. We who have reached a very high level of national development and strength can afford greater concessions to the Latin American republics who are only in the early stages of national development. At the same time, our position inherently carries with it the responsibility and obligation of determining in each given instance whether technical cooperation is feasible or desirable in terms of the larger objectives of assisting sound and durable social and economic development.

Recently a report prepared for the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations raised these issues in very sharp form. "Some countries," it stated, "are ruled by corrupt or reactionary cliques whose regime might be overthrown by the people if there were no foreign aid and who may be settled in their rule because grants have become available." Elsewhere, in a chapter entitled "Preconditions of Economic Development," the authors of the report come to the following conclusion:

"In our judgement there are a number of underdeveloped countries where the concentra-

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Landscape. Oil.

By Michael Baxte.

Michel Baxte

By Andrew Langston

IN THIS age of mechanical standardization and utmost specialization, lives that wander off the beaten track, personalities possessed of the power to trace a line of their own, not in conformance with the general standards, and equipped with a culture enriched from many and varied sources and vital in many directions, have become almost extinct.

Michael Baxte, the artist whose work is being presented this month at the Galeria de Arte Mexicano, is one such rare person. His extraordinary life would fill a volume. We can do no more here than touch upon a few of its salient points, to present a schematic view of it, which will enable us to better understand his art.

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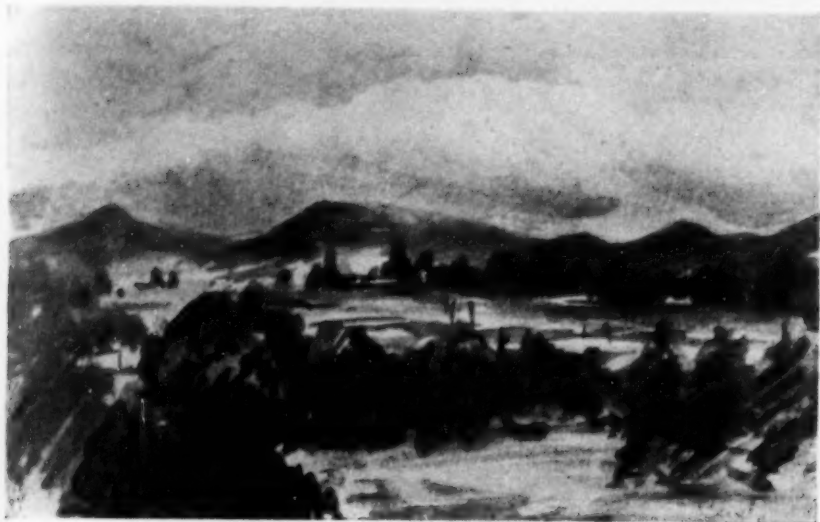
One of the innumerable drab little villages, lost in the flat immensity of White Russia, was the scene of Michael Baxte's birth, in the year 1890. His father had died, at a very young age, three weeks before, and during the same year a brother and sister had died also, leaving his young mother with three other children, boys, to carry on her burden.

Slowly little Michael's eyes opened on a world of primeval forests, the great river Dnieper, and fields, fields, extending on all sides to the far horizon. Moujiks and poor Jews. The church, white with bright

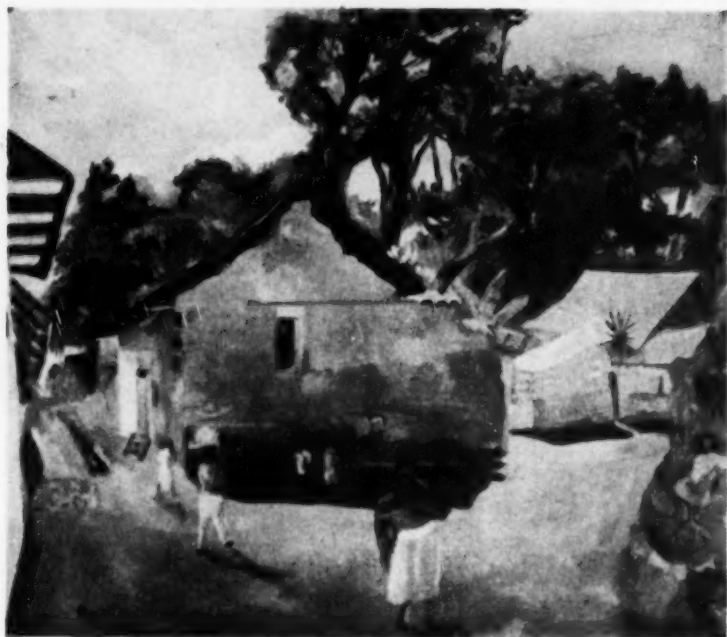
green cupolas and gay bells. The synagogue; the overwhelming brilliancy and joy of spring and summer; the sadness of autumn; the short days and endless nights of months bound in snow and ice; nostalgic songs in the fields in summer; silence in winter; rivers ice-bound; rivers overflowing; gay fairs ending in drunken brawls; poverty and oppression and ignorance, and the rich, fertile and generous earth; the great, deep poetry of primitive life embedded in nature. These are the things the child absorbed with his breath.

Left to himself in the chaotic circumstances that followed his father's death, in the care of a peasant woman, little Michael learned early to depend upon himself and to listen to the voices within him. School and teachers were things almost unknown. He had to learn what he could from life and nature. This situation, deplorable as may seem, was not without its compensations. Unguided, left to himself, Michael was able to follow his natural bent and to retain the integrity of nature. This might have been wrought with dangers for most, but in his case it has proven to be good.

His initial impulse was toward the written word. At the age of ten he wrote a long and complicated story. But soon an urge for music took the upper hand. It was a perfectly normal urge, for Michael was indeed endowed with a truly remarkable talent for music.



Landscape in Hidalgo, Cal.
By Michael Saxe.



Indians at Uruapan, Ohi.
By Michael Saxe.



Chero, Charcoal Drawing.
By Michael Saxe.

Valley in Jalisco. Oil.
By Michael Saxe.



Valley of Mexico. Oil.
By Michael Saxe.

Landscape in Oaxaca.
Pencil Drawing.
By Michael Saxe.





Landscape in Hidalgo. Oil.

By Michael Baxte.

But here begins another phase in the young artist's life. His father had been a well-to-do merchant; but after his death the situation of the family became progressively more difficult, and soon the proverbial "uncle in America" was the only way out of the insurmountable problems. His brothers were the first to go to the "promised land." Eventually, they sent for their mother and Michael. This was the first uprooting, at the age of fifteen, the most painful one, to be followed by others perhaps less painful, yet not less important in the course of his life.

For a time the impact of the new world silenced and confused everything in young Michael. New York frightened him. He lost contact with reality. Nothing was real to him except the memory of the world he left behind—the rivers, the forests, the fields, the people. Presently, this child of nature, uprooted, benumbed, bewildered and homesick, discovers a place of refuge for his aching soul. Was it by pure accident? Was it due to some atavistic compulsion? No one can tell. But the place of refuge was the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He spent there many happy hours on week days, sensing for the first time the beauty of things created by human imagination. This contact with art deposited within Michael's soul a grain destined to sprout in due time and bear fruit.

* * *

Then Michael was sent to an uncle (not a proverbial uncle this time), who lived in a small town in Mississippi, in the deep South, in the heart of the Cotton Belt. An immense river again. Again people in the fields singing plaintive songs. But the people

were black and the fields white with cotton. Blazing heat and sudden violent rain storms. A different world. Yet he felt almost at home.

It was his uncle, an accomplished violinist, who revived in Michael the old desire to become a musician, and who after a time sent him to New Orleans where he could study under good masters.

Life assumed a new vision and purpose for Michael in New Orleans of more than forty years ago. Colorful and exotic in a semi-tropical way, with its "Carrée," its French Opera House and French Market, and a Spanish undercurrent. Patios savouring of Seville; the dusky patina of Negroes. A great river bringing on its yellow waters the products of the inland. And the mysterious breath of the world beyond the horizon.

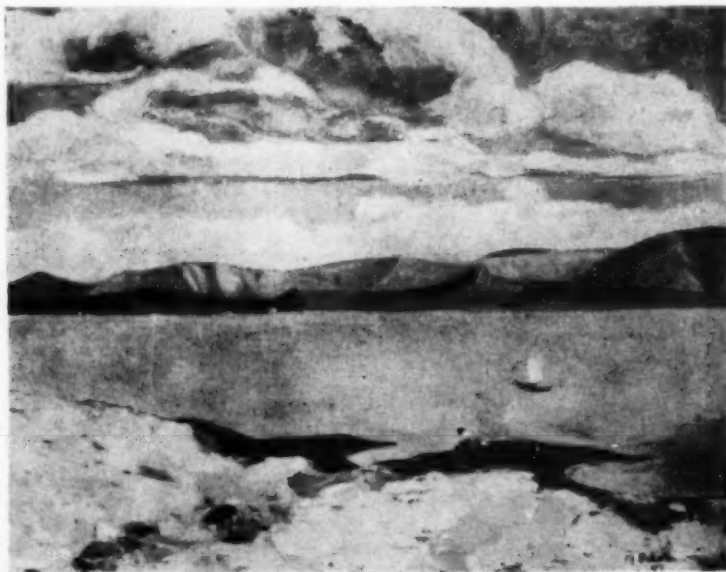
Michael gave himself entirely over to his studies, and, after a time, encouraged by his rapid progress, he made up his mind to recross the Atlantic for the sake of higher musical learning. New Orleans argued for Paris. The great name of Joseph Joachim, however, made him finally decide on Berlin.

After five years of intense study under celebrated masters of the violin, Michael Baxte returned to New York, where in a short time he met with notable success, composing, performing and teaching. But music was not to be his lifetime task.

In 1916 he met the highly gifted French painter Violette Mége. They were attracted to each other by deep natural affinities, and he became a frequent visitor at her studio. He watched her paint, while she talked to him about her own art and that of others in the simple yet revealing way true artists talk, and gradually the latent painter in him stirred. Calmly, patiently, she urged him to paint. He resisted at first; then one day, in her absence, he tremulously took her brushes and palette and made his first attempt. This was the beginning of a process that changed his life, a process from which emerged Baxte the painter.

For a number of years painting was to Baxte what the famous "vion d'Ingres" had been to that painter: a diversion from his musical labors. But in the end Sundays and holidays no longer sufficed: painting claimed its due until it became physically unbearable to keep abreast two major arts. His health suffered under the strain. It was becoming clear that a choice would have to be made. It had become clear to him also that painting was the more satisfying medium of expression for his deeper self. A decision had to be made. And as it often happens in life, an outside event brought things to a head. In this case it was an exhibition of the work of Cezanne. The po-

Continued on page 47



Lake Chapala. Oil.

By Michael Baxte.

Un Poco de Todo

CONTINUOUS CREATION

THERE are about a hundred million galaxies—colossal swirls of stars. How were they created? Even before the war Fred Hoyle, Hermann Bondi and Thomas Gold, three bold, bright young mathematicians of Cambridge University, decided that the original star-stuff was still lying around in the black spaces of the universe and that new galaxies were being formed. If this is so the notion of a universe that is dying or running down like a clock, a notion fostered by Eddington and Jeans, is wrong. So is the notion that the matter in the universe was created all of a sudden. The self-renewing universe of Hoyle, Bondi and Gold was so startling that astrophysicists rejected it. Now comes the Astronomer Royal, Sir Harold Spencer Jones, with a pronouncement in its favor.

The raw stuff of creation was hydrogen, the most plentiful element in the universe. Much is left, says Hoyle—about an atom of it in every pint of space. This is not much to buyers of milk but a lot when all space is considered. Hoyle holds that this vast reserve must be embarrassing to those who follow Eddington in believing that at first matter was concentrated in a small space and that it then began to expand. There seems no doubt that the universe is expanding. But is this balloon of a universe finite or infinite in age? From the mathematical work of Hoyle, Bondi and Gold it seems that the age of the universe and the volume of space are infinite. The galaxies disappear in the expanding universe, and the most powerful telescope can never reveal what becomes of them. But other galaxies are formed out of the hydrogen lying around.

All this does not mean that the expanding universe of the relativists is a myth. In fact, expansion and creation proceed together. Under the new dispensation space simply stretches as the universe expands, so that there is no difficulty in accounting for the new matter that is being formed. If we cannot actually behold the process of creation it is because it takes a thousand million years to add a new atom to each pint of space, according to Hoyle and his colleagues. Under the Eddington-Jeans dispensation it did not matter much to us if the end of all, billions and billions of years hence, was stagnation, a gloomy "heat death." Somehow it is comforting to think that the universe will go on forever.

ARTIFICIAL MOON

The idea of an artificial satellite was discussed a generation ago by Herman Oberth, a German engineer, who thought it would have its uses as a filling station for rocketships on their way to the Moon. He suggested that on it a mirror two miles in diameter might be mounted to catch the rays of the sun and generate about 10,000,000 horsepower. Directed on the earth the rays could boil away terrestrial lakes and reduce small communities to ashes. Since Oberth went into these terrifying possibilities radio and television would become a reality if an artificial moon could be used as a station—trustworthy in the sense that there would be no interference by magnetic storms or by "static."

Just in what orbit the satellite should be assem-

bled by men in space-suits after the structural elements have been literally dumped into space by rocket carriers is the subject of much recent discussion. Three German engineers, R. Engle, U. T. Boedewadt and R. Hanisch, have examined the arguments for all the orbits and think the most practical would be one 365 miles away. To build a twenty-man, 510-ton outpost at this distance would take about three years cost half a billion dollars and require 375 flights by feeder rockets. Werner von Braun is even bolder. In a lecture recently delivered at Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Ala., he declared it possible to build a wheel-shaped satellite 250 feet wide to make a complete revolution around the earth every two hours at a distance of 1,075 miles and a speed of 15,840 miles an hour.

The difficulties that must be overcome before an artificial satellite and feeder rockets can be built are staggering. Yet the technologists most competent to speak on the subject agree that the feat is possible, given time and money enough. Every useful orbit—useful in both a military and a scientific sense—has been calculated, as well as the advantages of one orbit over another. But it is sad to think that military need has counted for more in carrying the rocketeers thus far than any desire to study the heavens outside the earth's murky atmosphere or to make it possible to do away with all the radio stations on the earth and consolidate them into stations outside the atmosphere or to reach out to other worlds.

HOW LIFE BEGAN

The theory that life on earth may have begun spontaneously through the chance chemical union of organic compounds floating in prehistoric seas well over a billion years ago was expounded by Dr. G. W. Beadle, geneticist of the California Institute of Technology, at a recent Mills College Centennial Symposium on evolution. Because there are no longer masses of organic compounds from which such life may have sprung, he thinks the process cannot be repeated again.

It may have taken as long as thousands or even millions of years for the first "living molecule" to produce a second like itself, in Dr. Beadle's opinion. "But somewhere, somehow," he said, "a chance combination of compounds must have acquired a new property it never had before—the ability to duplicate itself and to undergo mutation. This presumably was the precursor of all present living things."

Development of this first bit of life to even the simplest alga perhaps represents a greater step in evolution than the development from amoeba to man. The process may have taken a billion years.

Viruses, according to Dr. Beadle, are at both the beginning and the end of the scale of living things. Not only are they like the first probable form of life, but they are also the final stage of degeneration of higher forms of living things under conditions of parasitism.

"All during the process during which living things have been evolving to give increasingly complex forms, evolution has been going on in the other direction as well," he said.

Literary Appraisals

THE STATE OF LATIN AMERICA. By German Arciniegas. Translated from the Spanish by Harriet de Onís. 416 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

THE latest revolutions in Latin America—brief and virtually bloodless in Cuba, more like a true civil war in Bolivia—have pointed up once more the timeless instability of government in the so-called Good Neighbor countries. German Arciniegas' new book, which supplies some excellent background on the new Bolivian regime, and considerably less on the resurgence of Fulgencio Batista, has accordingly acquired a topicality its knowing author might very well have counted on, even though he could not have set a date or place for the next particular coup.

Properly, Mr. Arciniegas is concerned more with chronic than with acute ills. And it is his primary view that a vast conspiracy against democracy, liberty and human rights holds the stage in Latin America, that it is not Communist, and that the whole drama can be perceived in terms of two actors, the Dictators and the People.

In his study of all twenty of the other Americas, the Colombian historian, educator and political expatriate recurrently makes the point that has plagued hemisphere policymakers in Washington for years: Since the army in Latin America is less an instrument of national defense than of political self-perpetuation, United States recognition and military aid often mean the deeper entrenchment of dictators whose principles and policies we nominally abhor. In Washington right now the question has been argued back and forth whether we should recognize a Bolivian who came to power by force—but who a year ago won an unquestioned plurality in an election nullified by a military junta which we did recognize.

Mr. Arciniegas cannot solve problems like that any more definitively than Assistant Secretaries of State for American Republic Affairs have been able to solve it. He does state it a lot more frankly than they have dared. At the same time the author, a proud, patriotic and accomplished Latino himself, has more long-range faith in the People, who resist the Dictator, than many diplomats. His book is disconcerting but fundamentally hopeful.

* * *

What Mr. Arciniegas has to say about communism in the other Americas will puzzle some norteamericanos and prod others to protest. "Theoretically," he writes, "it would seem that Latin America is a fertile field for communism. Yet it is amazing how few addicts this party has made. In fact, it may be said that in Latin America communism is non-existent * * *. Why does communism fail to take hold there? Because in Latin America the thirst for freedom is as great as the thirst for justice * * *."

Having been slaves and colonials, his argument continues, the Latins are not "buying a return ticket"—i. e., via the route to Moscow (which Peruvian ex-Communist Eudocio Ravines recently described in "The Yenan Way.")

Unfortunately, Mr. Arciniegas has already accurately recorded—171 pages earlier—that in 1945 Brazil's Communist party polled 568,000 votes. Although he is careful enough to note that the voters were "Communists not because of Karl Marx or Stalin, but because of Luis Carlos Prestes"; and although he subsequently emphasizes that in Latin America (as elsewhere) words like "peace," "democracy" and

"communism" have all sorts of meanings—he palpably fails to press his qualification in the Brazilian case to its ultimate meaning. If he did, it would be manifest that the half-million-odd "Communists" marshaled by Prestes in 1945 were not Communists at all.

For when Getulio Vargas was returned to power by the election of 1950, it was with the support of virtually all the impoverished and illiterate non-whites who had voted Red five years before. The key point—which the author fails to make—is that in both cases these voters wanted exactly the same thing—economic betterment. And that is not to say that Vargas is a Communist or that Prestes (or Vargas) was an idealistic emancipator.

Mr. Arciniegas knows that, but his handling of the difficult Communist issue is at best diffuse where for both clarity and effectiveness it should have been concentrated. He quite properly reiterates that the easiest tactic for the contemporary caudillo is to call all his opponents Communists—particularly when an influential North American ear is within range.

Between Mexico and Argentina he does a neat job in summing up Nicaragua's Anastasio Somoza; has kind words for New York-born Gals Plaza Lasso of Ecuador; and gives Paraguay's Natalicio González enough credit as a writer but far too much as a President. He also tends to oversubscribe to Fleurbaey's theory that Eva Perón had a forerunner in Encarnación Ezcurra de Rosas in the Eighteen Forties.

* * *

As perhaps the most persistent and resourceful spokesman in the world for the Colombian Liberal (opposition) Party, Mr. Arciniegas hammers mercilessly on what he considers an unqualified tyranny in his own land. He charges President Laureano Gómez with the destruction of a democracy—and with having sent a Colombian battalion to Korea purely to court the favor of this country, and thus to secure more arms for use against his domestic foes. Mr. Arciniegas is careful enough to praise the willing valor of the individual Colombians making up the expeditionary force, especially since he implies the Liberals among them felt they would be as well off in Korea as under Gómez at home.

But because of his personal involvement in Colombian politics—he was Minister of Education under Liberal President Eduardo Santos—Mr. Arciniegas cannot be expected to be entirely objective about the six-year-old Conservative regime. He makes much of the "unanimous" election of Gómez in November, 1949. What he fails to say is what this correspondent, among other foreign observers, noted in Bogotá at the time: that the Liberal leadership lacked direction and purpose, and that its decision to boycott the polls confused its own rank and file and was, indeed, playing into the hands of the Conservatives.

This is the first survey of all Latin America since Ray Josephs' "Latin America: Continent in Crisis" appeared in 1948. It is heartening to report that it is a book, not a notebook; that it was written, not jotted down; and that the number of trivial factual errors is at a minimum. It is easy to forgive a man for calling Perón's propaganda office the "secretaría" instead of the "subsecretaría" of information, when he writes with the authority, the grace and the persuasion of Germán Arciniegas.

M. B.

EXPLOITATION OF THE VALLEY OF THE AMAZON. By William Lewis Herndon Edited and with an introduction by Hamilton Basso. Illustrated. 201 pp. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

IN 1851, Lieut. William Lewis Herndon of the United States Navy received official orders to make a journey from Peru down the intricate system of rivers leading into the Amazon and on to its mouth. Herndon's orders told him to report on the "present conditions of the valley, with regard to navigability of its streams but also its capacities for cultivation and the character and extent of its undeveloped resources." Although Brazil did not open up the Amazon River to international navigation until 1867, several countries were already interested in the potentialities of the region. Herndon's mission was in many ways a nineteenth-century technical mission analogous to those being sent out by the Point Four program and by the United Nations nowadays.

Herndon's report was first published in 1854 replete with scientific data. It is republished now for the first time, stripped of most of the technical detail and edited by Hamilton Basso. Herndon's full report was a good travel book. It inspired Mark Twain "with a longing to ascend the Amazon" and as Hamilton Basso says in his introduction, Herndon's book may well have been "one of the inspirations for 'Life on the Mississippi.'" In its present, reduced form, "Exploration of the Valley of the Amazon" is still a good travel book.

Although a large portion of the book deals with Herndon's travel through the Peruvian highlands and down the mountain region of Peru, he also describes the portion of his trip through the Amazon lowlands. Herndon writes sympathetically of his day-to-day encounters with people, of dealings with local authorities, of the Padres, of the semi-civilized peasants and of the Indians.

He describes details of custom, of the country and of travel with a simplicity and direct honesty that might serve as a model for our more modern travel writers. The Amazon Valley has not changed fundamentally since Herndon's day. There are airplanes overhead, regular passenger steamers on the main waterways, and the Amazon towns and cities he visited are now larger. Yet much that he saw and experienced might well be repeated today.

Herndon's journey was not exploration in the sense of traversing hitherto unknown country. He encountered European and American traders and planters all along his route. As early as 1542, a Spanish expedition from Peru under Francisco de Orellana made a similar journey down the Amazon system to its mouth. Numerous other expeditions were made by well known scientists and naturalists, such as Count Castelnau, Von Spix and Von Martius. Alfred Russel Wallace, Henry Walter Bates and others, before Herndon visited the Amazon. It should be said that Von Spix and Von Martius were better scientists than Herndon, and Bates in his "Naturalist on the River Amazon," writes with more authority and, in my opinion, with more literary quality.

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Hamilton Basso has on the whole been judicious in his editing and "striking out of material that seemed *** to have little contemporary interest," yet I am afraid that scholars and scientists will still have to go back to the original edition. Passages have been omitted which seem to me as interesting (and certainly as valuable to the scholar) as those left untouched. Furthermore, there is no indication in the present edition where alterations of cuts in the original have been made.

C. W.

THE SPENDTHRIFIS. By PIERRE GALDÓS. Translated from the Spanish by Gamel Woolsey. Illustrated by Charles Mozley. Introduction by Gerald Brenan. The Illustrated Novel Library. 282 pp. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young.

PIERRE GALDÓS died in Madrid in 1920. His grandfather had been an officer of the inquisition. He on the contrary, was a militant liberal in the novel ("Dona Perfecta," "Gloria," "Angel Guerra," etc.) as well as the drama ("Electra," "Papa Juan," "Sister Simona"), who came to be the champion of the struggle against the medieval spirit of the monarchy. He died in the "odor of sanctity," adored by his fellow countrymen as the prophet of republican democracy.

Most of his novels are a realistic accumulation of trivial details around persons who attained national literary significance. Put the sum of these trivialities is rich in meaning not only within the Spanish historical perspective but in the picture of the esthetic ideas of the period. This is true in masterworks of psychological analysis like "The Forbidden," or of metaphysical intention like "Reality." And in specially sentimental narratives like "Marianela," and in allegories of oneiric nature which could be read today as excellent avant-garde novels: "The Shadow," for example.

Galdós, then, is an author deserving the most serious consideration. Besides the psychological novel and drama—plays like "Papa Juan" triumphantly toured American theatres—Galdós wrote two extensive series of novels relating national episodes in the history of Spain. Some, like "Gerona," are works of genius; others, like "Tráfalgar," sordid and commonplace. Oddly, however, while Galdós' virtues are his own, his vices are those of his time. This is the disadvantage of populist idealism in art. Dostoevsky in Russia, Balzac in France, and Dickens in England were spared this danger. Galdós in short, unlike Balzac and Dostoevsky, is a patriarch of liberalism. His work has acquired equally monumental dimensions—yet outside of Spain he continues to be almost unknown.

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Beside his other work, "The Spendthrifts" stands out as a rather curious example. Out of sympathy, Galdós has chosen a social group whose life he only half knew: the subaltern employes of the Royal House in the times of Isabel II. These are humble people of feudal ideology dazzled by a splendor they vainly try to assimilate through dress, soirées and mannerisms. As persons they are an example of mediocrity bordering on the vile and sometimes attaining the vulgar-sublime. An author like Quevedo would make bloody caricatures of such people. Valle Inclán would see farce and mummery. Galdós exposes their wretchedness and lack of greatness with benevolent humor.

This humor distinguishes all the work of Galdós. His satire without gall has the same tone with the duchess as with popular heroes. Faithful to Spanish literary tradition, the author looks at his characters from above as a god surveys his poor creatures, although it is true that this god is not severe and belongs to the kindly heaven of Cervantes. When the triumphant revolution of 1870 carries the masses to the palace gates and the Queen escapes to France the rabble safeguards the treasures of the royal house; and hundreds of third-rate servants, afraid of being put to the sword, are astonished to see the people behaving responsibly. Among the revolutionaries who watch over the palace is Galdós himself, and that is why he writes in the first person.

Entitled "La de Bringas" in Spanish, the book has been excellently translated by Gamel Woolsey, and the drawings by Charles Mozley are good reminiscences of the period. Gerald Brenan, familiar to readers of Spanish literature, has written a vivacious and expressive introduction.

R. B.

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JOURNEY IN THE SUN. By Dane Chandos. 278 pp.
New York: Doubleday & Co.

THE easy way to travel in Spain is with a car, a Spanish-speaking chauffeur of proven ability, and a legacy from Uncle Edward. The car insures the tourist against discomfort in rickety trains and crowded buses. Also, because automobiles cost so much there, its possession sets the owner apart from common folk and, except where he is competing with other owners, assures him a certain deference in matters of food and lodging. Any troubles the car may have will be handled by the chauffeur. Any troubles the chauffeur may have will be handled by the legacy.

This framework for a travel book works so well that one regrets it is partly fictional. Dane Chandos has written other books about the sun, as seen in Mexico. That the sun also shines in Spain gives him a familiar point of departure. He spices his characters with the fictional ingredients well known to readers of his older books—availability, pity, laughter, an occasional hint of terror, a breath of sex.

But the places of this travelogue are real, its history straight out of the guide books. It carries the armchair traveler through Spain, in and out of Portugal, observing ancient architecture, enjoying a bull fight, and eating abundantly, and better than most travelers in Spain.

Continued on page 66



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Current Attractions

A MEW PLAY BY USIGLI

By Vane C. Dalton

THE most conspicuous event in our dramatic realm this month has been the presentation of a new play by Rodolfo Usigli, our most distinguished playwright, at the Teatro Colón. The play, "Jano es Una Muchacha," has been billed with the discreet admonition that it is "unsuitable for minors or young ladies," and this admonition, despite the lamentably flooded streets in the vicinity of the Colón produced by the heaviest rainy season we have had in years, has been attracting night after night capacity crowds of adult males and older ladies who are apparently curious to find out why this play is unsuitable for younger folk.

I am sure, however, that the impresarios of the Teatro Colón had not intended this admonition as box-office bait, that in view of the recent drastic measures carried out by our city officials against bawdy spectacles and pornographic publications, it was meant as a timely precaution. And yet it has exerted upon our public the lure of forbidden fruit.

And while I am inclined to agree with the impresarios that "Jano es Una Muchacha" is hardly an appropriate vehicle for the highschool trade, frankly, I found it on the whole only mildly shocking. The dialogue has only an occasional unprintable word, and though the story might be of the kind a straight-laced *cuitadano* would class as "escabroso," its realism is hardly as crude as that projected in most of the films made in France and shown with similar billboard admonitions in local theatres.

What makes this play conspicuous is the fact that it was written by a Mexican author and that it deals

with Mexican reality. In this respect, Señor Usigli has plainly defied our conventional susceptibilities; though, as a matter of fact, he has done pretty much the same thing in almost all the plays he had written in the past. The "escabroso" element is largely that of the setting and characters, a brothel and its inmates, whereupon the author has developed his plot. But even here it is not the type of brothel Kuprin described in "Yama" or James Jones in "From Here to Eternity," or Sholom Asch in "God of Vengeance," or the type which abounds in the "tolerance zones" of this city. It is a rather sedate kind of establishment located in a provincial city, which caters to the more "select" kind of trade and whose "landlady" likes to read poetry in her leisure hours and can hold her own in highbrow conversation.

It is to this kind of establishment that a life-weary and homeless wanderer, a successful though disillusioned writer, returns after twenty and some odd years of roving about the world, in the hope of finding something which he had lost in his youth. He has returned to his native town where he no longer has kith or kin, and he has come to this house of ill repute drawn by a vague desire to recuperate a lost illusion, to recover a dream, to tie a broken thread that might bring him back to his youth, to a starting place. He has, in other words, truly reached the end of his journey.

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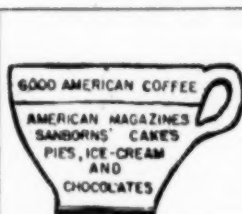
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Upon this pathetic premise Usigli has evolved his dramatic story. Here, by means of various episodes, which despite their realistic tenor are essentially romantic, Usigli once more exploits a theme which by way of different plots he has exploited in some of his foregone plays—the theme of man's frustrated longings for an ideal fulfillment in the form of a perfect woman. Only in this play such longings are admittedly futile, or at least there is in it implicit despair, for the protagonist at the end of his Odyssey selects a brothel as his final goal.

And does he actually find this perfect woman, this rose on a dunghheap? The author, with considerable resourcefulness, apparently strives to convince us that he does. I say apparently because the finale, with its melodramatic minutiae of an avenging pistol-shot, does not convincingly solve the problem posed by the author. The life-weary wanderer departs from the tragic mess accompanied by a seventeen-year-old convent-bred virgin, who, we are asked to believe, will imbue him at the age of forty-five with a new creative afflatus and will to live.

The author, it seems to me, evolved his final act in this manner simply because a play must have a definite ending. He constructed his plot according to dramatic rule; but the theme underlying his plot, and which to me represents the play's main value, has not been concluded by the final curtain. Usigli, who started out as a poet, despite the crude realism wherewith he approaches life in his plays, is still essentially a poet. He is still a seeker of beauty and truth amid a reality of filth and degradation; he still believes that the pursuit of an ideal is the only justification of human existence.

And it is this underlying theme that lends significance to a play which otherwise might seem dramatically defective, purposefully lurid, or even obscene. It is the common human substance defined in the tormented soul of the returned wayfarer, the stark pathos of frustration, and the unebbing though obviously hopeless zeal to go on seeking, that constitute the veritable merit of the play.

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As regards its presentation, I have seldom seen a finer performance on a Mexican stage. The most appropriately chosen cast—beginning with Isabela Corona in the role of the "landlady," Rosita Diaz Gimeno, in that of Mariana, José Luis Jimenez as Felipe, and ending with Prudencia Grifell as Camila—achieves under the admirably fine direction of Luis G. Basurto an interpretation that deserves the highest praise.

Notions About Mexico . . .

Continued from page 19

to pay eight "dollars" for a single meal (in other words, about 93 cents for a five-course dinner that in the United States would cost a dollar and a half or two dollars), the incident imperils their faith in human nature. They may top off the experience by giving the waiter 20 centavos (equivalent to two cents), determined to make it do the work of twenty cents.

Well, I must excuse myself now, because I have to go to the bank to purchase liras for my forthcoming trip to Italy. Liras, you know, are the Italian dollars. Just now you can buy 600 Italian dollars for one American dollar. That is pretty wonderful, but when those brigands charge me 600 "dollars" for one dinner, you will hear my howls clear across the Atlantic Ocean. Of course you understand I am going, not to Little Italy, but to Big Italy.

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Art and Personal Notes

MICHAEL BAXTE, the American painter who after many years of residence in France has established his permanent home in Mexico some ten years ago, and whose works have been seldom exhibited in local galleries, is presenting a magnificent collection of his newer paintings at the Galería de Arte Mexicano (Calle de Milan No. 18).

This, without doubt, is the month's outstanding artistic event. In his portraits, still life and landscapes of Mexico Baxte has achieved a work which is distinct and widely apart from almost everything we are accustomed to see in local galleries. Seeing this work one experiences the very rare and immediate sensation of beholding the achievement of a veritable master.

FIVE Centuries of Print-Making is the title of the exhibition patronized by the Asociación Mexicana de Amigos del Arte and staged in the course of this month on the third floor of the Seguro Social building on the Paseo de la Reforma.

The exhibit includes a number of works of great value: such as two prints by Dürer; two by Rembrandt, one by Watteau; two by Piranesi, and two by Gustav Doré. Of Mexican engravers, the exposition offers representative works by José Guadalupe Posada, Manuel Manillo, and among the moderns, those by Roberto Montenegro, Julio Prieto, Carlos Merida and Angel Zamarripa.

THE Mexican-North American Institute of Cultural Relations (Avenida Yucatan 63) is currently presenting an exhibition of drawings and paintings in gouache by the American artist Lester Epstein.

The artist was born at St. Louis, Mo. in 1919, and was a student at Washington University when he entered military service, spending four and a half years in the army. During the past several years he has been living and painting in Mexico, spending a

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great deal of his time in tropical villages of Oaxaca and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

His present exhibit consists of forty-two drawings and six gouaches. Simultaneously with this exhibit, the Reger Gallery (Calle de Lisbon 60) is showing thirty-four paintings in duco, likewise by this artist.

AN unusually interesting collection of serigraph paintings by the American artist Clea Gaston may be seen from the 6th to the 26th of this month at the Galeria Arte Moderno (Plaza Santos Degollado No. 16-C). All of this gifted artist's work is based on Mexican themes.

EL CIRCULO de Bellas Artes (Avenida Juarez 58) is offering at this time a voluminous one-man show of paintings in oil by the Spanish artist José Bardasano. Very competent, though definitely academic in style, this painter has gathered for his present show a collection of portraits, still life, landscapes, nude studies and genre themes, a great many of which are of miniature proportions.

THE Mexican North American Cultural Institute has received word from the Rockefeller Foundation of a grant of \$22,750 dollars to be used to sponsor a Centro Mexicano de Escritores, under the direction of the noted author, Miss Margaret Shedd, as an extension of the varied cultural work carried on by the Institute.

The grant will provide for ten fellowships, of \$1,150 each for the years of 1952 and 1953, to include four fellowships for Mexican writers for creative work, and three for North American writers for cooperative work on several research problems. The group will concentrate on a professional rather than an academic

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approach to their work. It is expected that a very limited number of young American writers will participate in the work of the Center.

Under the direction of Miss Shedd, conference and work groups, as well as various study groups will be set up in the Institute, made possible through the generosity of the Foundation.

Human Relations in Technical . . .

Continued from page 26

tion of economic and political power in the hands of a small class, whose main interest is the preservation of its own wealth and privileges, rules out the prospect of much economic progress until a social revolution has effected a shift in the distribution of income and power.

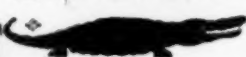
"There cannot be rapid economic progress unless the leaders of a country at all levels—politicians, teachers, engineers, business leaders, trade unionists, priests, journalists—desire economic progress for the country and are willing to pay its price, which is the creation of a society from which economic, political and social privileges have been eliminated." (Cited in the New York Times, May 14, 1951).

These considerations are not irrelevant in assessing the Latin American scene and its adaptability to the larger aims of technical cooperation. They are very troublesome considerations because they enormously complicate what might otherwise appear to be the simple rules of international conduct among friendly and sovereign nations.

Here, I believe are the elements which make up the broad context in which the problems of human relations and values, as they relate to technical cooperation, are posed. In the last analysis, they are the problems of technical cooperation. They can be solved with reasonable adequacy, but the criteria cannot be inflexible and arbitrary. The great danger is that these problems will not be sufficiently recognized. We can anticipate a vast and effective marshalling of financial, scientific, technological and administrative resources and skill as we develop a program of technical cooperation with Latin America. They will not be enough to do the job unless the knowledge, resources and skills required to understand the societies of Latin America and the dynamics of their cultures are also marshalled and effectively applied to the common task.

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Continued from page 20

victim of indecision, for she knew that she needed them both, though she realized in moments of despair that things could not go on like this indefinitely and that the day would come when she would finally have to choose between the two.

She was spared this choice by Ricardo. He surmised at last that his passion was compensated by a wayward infatuation and that this infatuation was not sufficiently deep or enduring to surpass her innate pride and ambition, that she would never be willing to relinquish her wealth, her comforts and social position to marry a man of obscure origin and modest means. He perceived at last that with her the material substance of life was of foremost importance and that it could never be supplanted by sentiment or ideal, that she was indeed incapable of veritable love.

He gave her up, suffered months of anguish and torture, of constant striving against an urge to take his life, then married the first girl that chanced to cross his path. And it was not till then that she accepted the inevitable. She and Fausto were wedded in the city's most fashionable church. There were many costly presents and lengthy accounts in the newspapers, and a trip to Europe and the eventual settling down to a matronly routine in a fine big house Fausto had built in the new and select district of Colonia Roma.

It was in a room on the top floor of this same house that she now lay resting in her bed, oblivious of the rain that softly beat on the windows, striving to collect the broken images that crowded her mind into a coherent vision, seeking to recapture her remote past in order to find an answer to the dire problem which confronted her now.

* * *

She did not meet Ricardo till after her daughter was born. More than two years had gone by; her life with Fausto followed by then a perfectly tranquil and even course; she was neither happy nor unhappy, but she was free of unrest or conscious frustration and she believed that she was quite immune from emotional hazards. She did not think that the sight of Ricardo would make her heart throb with wild eagerness, that it would reawaken in her something that she thought was dead and could never be brought to life again.

She met him going out of a downtown store, literally collided with him on the sidewalk, and as he lifted his hat to apologize she saw the startled anguished look in his eyes and heard him mutter, "Why it is you . . . it is you . . ." And she knew in that instant that Ricardo had never vanished from her life, that she had never given him up, that she had been sustained through the years by the knowledge that he existed somewhere, that he existed for her, and that some day he would return.

So it was the same thing over again. Only now the torment was much more intense, the peril too great to be met with mere duplicity. She fumbled through weeks of artifice and deceit, of tortured waiting and stealthy meetings—trysts in secluded nooks in the park and finally in sidestreets hotels where rooms were let by the hour—and then, when her artifice could no longer conceal her inner change and Fausto surmised the truth, she threw all caution to the winds and boldly came out in the open.

Fausto was unprepared to meet the crisis. His initial reaction of outraged honor, the impulse to vio-

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ience, soon yielded to impotent despair, to a mute resignation before a problem which only time might solve. He quietly bore his pain and humiliation, regarding her as the prey of a tragic malady from which she might some day recover. He treated her kindly, with supreme abnegation and forbearance, as one might treat an ailing child.

And then, thought it shocked her, she refused to accept the blame when Ricardo's wife, lacking her own husband's humility, escaped from her unbearable plight in suicide. She was dismayed by it, and yet beneath this dismay there was a feeling of ridance, of relief and of probable final liberation.

She left her husband and child a few months later and went away with Ricardo to a drab provincial town where for nearly a year she endured a life that had never assumed the substance of reality, an existence eternally harassed by small worries, haunted by a sense of delusion, of aimlessness, of irreparable error, a life of conflicting passions, confusion and regret. Ricardo as lover had filled a want in her life but he could not fill the want of a husband. Unable to provide a decorous livelihood, tormented by the same sense of delusion and aimlessness, he finally abandoned her.

She went back to the city and returned to the house where Fausto was waiting for her. He received her fearfully, without reproach or resentment, without condoning or condemning her deed, in a kind of unspoken and timorous gratitude, with the craven kindness of an unjustly beaten dog, afraid to reveal his happiness, to confess his relief from the horrible suffering she had caused him, awkwardly, self-consciously striving to hide his joy while treating her with the solicitude and affection due a beloved convalescent.

And her state indeed was that of a convalescent. She returned home to resume a life that had been completely shattered and that had to be remade anew, and for this she lacked fortitude and will. She was contented to retrieve her child—the strange little daughter who likewise regarded her with a fearful affection—and she endeavored to assume her household tasks. But she was constantly pursued by a sense of abandon and failure, by a feeling that she had returned nowhere, and often she wept in solitude. It was Fausto's self-effacing devotion that finally enabled her to adjust herself to an existence of humdrum routine, to apathy and inertia, to a reality unstirred either by hope or regret.

The room was completely dark when her hands, that had for some time rested motionless over her knitting, suddenly began to move again. She was startled by an awareness of emerging from a void, by the first awareness of the rain that softly drummed on the windows. She recalled that it was raining on the evening when Ricardo returned. She recalled every word of the ensuing conversation in the hall at the foot of the stairs, recalled it as clearly as if it had been

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the day before. She saw Fausto, speechless, trembling, clasping the knob of the bannister, listening while Ricardo, calm and self-assured, explained that he returned to claim her, that she was his, that she had always been his, and that there was nothing in the world that could keep them apart. She recalled how clearly she sensed the truth of his words, how utterly inevitable seemed the course that lay ahead. She did not stop to pack, to say goodbye; she merely walked out into the rain, sharing Ricardo's dripping raincoat and guided by his firm hand.

The following years became blurred in her mind as if she beheld them through a curtain of rain. There was only the vague recollection and a remote echo of pain of the day when she found herself abandoned again, and when once more she sought refuge in this house. It was yet her home, though Fausto was no longer there. He had died of heart failure during her absence, and there was only her daughter and an aftermath of years wherein slowly her own existence became submerged in concerns over others, in a dedication to the life that grew up in her midst.

And now, when her own life was only a final feeble echo, she alone perceived the peril, she alone understood her granddaughter's plight. And this perception, coming to her suddenly with a piercing clarity, reverberated through her body and mind like a strident alarm and became an imperative summons, a desperate urge to act, to do something immediately, to at least make them see what she saw.

This is the right moment, she thought. They are now gathered at the table. I will not wait till they send up the tray. I will go downstairs and join them at supper. I will talk to them. I will make them listen. I will make them understand. She cannot, she must not, forsake the man she loves to enter a loveless marriage. She must not repeat my own tragic mistake.

* * *

They were mildly surprised when she appeared in the dining room and took her seat at the head of the table, and they were startled by her complete coherence when she began to talk. "It's about Evita," she said. "And it is well that you are here, for it is your life and future that is involved." She was pleased to see that they were listening, that their faces were turned at her in curious attention. I must make it clear, she said to herself. I must make them understand.

But as she talked on she observed that their surprise and interest presently began to wane, that the expressions on their faces slowly changed to the usual tolerant condescension, to slight annoyance and boredom, and unable to understand this change she was no longer able to understand her purpose. Baffled, forlorn, frantically striving to recall her purpose and to voice it convincingly, in briefest and exactest words, she sensed in utter helplessness and without comprehending that she was failing, that extraneous and irrelevant words were intruding on her speech, that she was not saying what she wanted to say but merely producing meaningless phrases.

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And as she went on talking, and desperately striving to emerge from the hiatus, they stopped listening, merely letting her talk, accepting it as an inconsequent and innocuous noise, presently resuming the conversation she had interrupted, as totally remiss of her words as they were of the ticking clock.

The Magical Marimba...

Continued from page 23

school teacher does not restrict himself to the black board; he also works for the health and wealth of his flock.

The marimba also goes down to the Chiapan coast. In San Benito, at a breakfast party, we were greeted by sharks in the breakers, pelicans skimming the foam in formation, and two marimbas offering the "William Tell Overture." The fantastic breakfast, on sand so hot the heat waves formed mirages, included tripe soup (good for growing eye-lashes!) sprinkled with chile and onions, frijoles with goat cheese, barbecued calf (it is buried for 24 hours in banana leaves and cooked on charecoal) served in enamel basins, thick yellow tortillas, Nescafe and beer.

And even in the last outpost of jungle squalor, in the border town of Suchiate, where houses are slats, tornadoes of dust blind the sun, and people are diseased from tip to toe; even here the beauty of the marimba penetrates the desperate poverty, gives grandeur, feeds hopes. Hopes which begin to materialize—a dam is being dug in Suchiate to irrigate 9000 hectares of this virgin soil.

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road worker's daughter, in overalls, and cropped hair, fanning a gringo as they dance a fox-trot and later eat the anona, which looks like an enormous, thick-skinned strawberry.

At midnight, the marimba in Tapachula, accompanying an exchange of ideas between archeologists, writers, labor leaders and finea owners on a balcony of the Ritz Hotel. Under them, on rock piles, door ledges and flat on the sidewalk, sleep Guatemaltecos who have walked four days to market across the border with a wagon load of pottery on their backs.

All through the wild land of Chiapas, with its unique, natural plenty and its wilderness of underdeveloped humanity, is the continuity of the marimba. It is an organic part of the overwhelming vegetation and the groping natives.

Like air and the atom, its tone and quality flow through every tendril and blood stream. And, as for unknown centuries, its beauty is everywhere.

Michael Baxte . . .
Continued from page 30

werful art of the Master of Aix shattered the last resistance in him and Baxte the painter triumphed over Baxte the musician. From that day he was done with music as a profession: painting from there on absorbed all his faculties. He liquidated all his musical activities; turned his pupils over to other teachers; distributed his furniture amongst his friends, and left with Mége for Paris.

It was in the spring of 1939 that Baxte was awarded the Dudensing Prize for Modern Painting in America, following the exhibition of his work at the Dudensing Galleries as part of the award. Later, there had been other exhibits and a favorable reception by public and critics. His name was gathering renown in the circles of art collectors and art lovers. He faced an auspicious outlook few artists would be likely to close their eyes to. But this was exactly what Michael Baxte did. He left and did not return until ten years later.

He underwent a new uprooting, and a new transplanting. A transplanting, because Baxte is the kind of man who cannot be in a place without taking root in it. What he wanted this time was a fertile soil for his growth as a painter. He wanted to enter the main current of artistic creativity, past and present.



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Ten years of intensive work followed, during which Baxte's art steadily gained in technical mastery and spiritual depth, and out of which emerged the Baxte of today—the unique personality in contemporary painting. In the course of those years Baxte and Mége, now inseparable, visited Italy, North Africa, Spain. The South of France, with its harmonious landscapes of subtle light and color was Baxte's favorite terrain. But he never lost touch with Paris. He returned to it at regular intervals.

The discerning Parisian art-loving public commenced to take note of this artist's work, and critics began to speculate on its exceptional qualities, as it made its appearance in individual showings, and at the Salon des Tuileries and the Salon d'Automne, and with various groups, and it was not long before his name became identified with contemporary French painting. He was now invited to participate in exhibitions of French art abroad sponsored by the Ministry of Fine Arts, which made his work known in the capital cities of many European countries.

It is worth mentioning that shortly upon Baxte's arrival in Paris from New York, the poet-art-dealer Zborowski, famous for bringing to light and to fame artists such as Modigliani, Utrillo, and Soutine, gave Baxte his first one-man show in Paris.

Baxte returned to the United States in the summer of 1939, to deliver a series of lectures on France and its art, under the auspices of the French government as part of a program in behalf of a closer understanding between the two peoples. But before the tour could begin, in November, the war broke out, and the lectures had to be abandoned. Mége, who

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Uruguay, 3

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had remained in Paris, foreseeing the approaching catastrophe, precipitatedly packed her bags and took passage for New York, leaving everything but a few paintings behind her.

It was impossible to return to Paris, and it was almost equally impossible to remain in New York with a purse nearly empty and small chance to replenish it. And what was even worse, the depressing effect of war made creative effort impossible. It was then that an old vision loomed before the anxious eyes of the stranded couple of artists—Mexico.

In the now remote days of his musical activities, Mexican pupils had talked to Baxte of their country in fascinating terms. It all came back to him now. But more than that in this moment of uncertainty was his long-standing friendship with the celebrated Mexican painter José Clemente Orozco. It was this friendship which induced their decision.

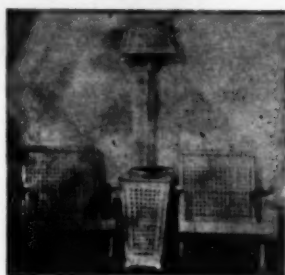
Baxte and Mége arrived in Mexico in the summer of 1941, and this meant a still another uprooting and transplanting. For a painter of the type of Michael Baxte cannot arrive in a new to him country, set up his easel and paint, as so many do. For him it is necessary first to send his roots well below the surface, to merge with the land and its people. Nothing is more distasteful to Baxte than the work of a superficial and empty brush, be it ever so clever.

Again ten years of intensive work. This time in the midst of the almost inextricable maze of different cultures that is Mexico. An exhibition (at the Galeria Decoración) in which were presented several of his initial efforts in this land, was enthusiastically received, and this gave him assurance. The present exhibition at the Galeria de Arte Mexicano comprises a selection of thirty-one paintings—landscapes, portraits and still life, chosen from his work in Mexico. This exhibition coincides with the publication by Ediciones Mexicanas of a handsome monograph containing examples of this artist's work.

The following excerpts from press comments by outstanding local critics reveal the position Michael Baxte has attained in Mexican art:

Margarita Nelken, In "Hoy": "... In this exhibition we have, in part, the work of this great, ve-

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great painter stemming from his communion with Mexico. For many Baxte is mainly a landscapist. But here are portraits, still life, flowers and other compositions, all of which reveal the same exquisite refinement of a palette that is complete master of its resources—master to the point of capturing the finest shading in light, the subtlest transitions from tone to tone, that modulate the shape of a human cheek. Baxte's mastery is so consummate that we never see him resort to any technical expedients or narrative features of a subject. In fixing the permanent character of a face or a figure, he employs the seemingly simplest means, without necessity of irrelevant effects. And everywhere the sensation of the "specific quality" of things is informed with so great a power of suggestion that one is compelled to speak of Baxte as the painter-musician, and of Baxte as the painter-poet."

The same critic, writing in the "Excehior," regarding a portrait of a boy, says: "...And here we have Baxte's Portrait of a Boy, one of the finest achievements in the art of child portraiture, in the interpretation of child-character, since Renoir... As to its technical qualities, particularly of its tonal relation, these attain as in many of his other compositions, a refinement in the color that places them beside the greatest masters of contemporary and universal art... A portrait of a child—nothing more, yet nothing less. A figure that in the exemplary sobriety of its craftsmanship—or more exactly, in the rigor of adaptation of craft to the character expressed—constitutes one of the most sensitive and conclusive works in the production of a painter who is numbered among those who are held by unanimous opinion to be the most earnest in the painting of universal importance."

Dr. Luis Lara Pardo, commenting in the "Revista de Revistas": "In Baxte we find an interpretation that is harmonic in its chromatic ordonances, which gives the impression of clearly articulated melodies... There are two landscapes wherein this im-

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pression is particularly emphasized: "Serenidad," where the dominant color of glowing yellows gives to earth and rocks a singularly tender quality, and "Dawn," which has a similar tonality of extremely subtle values. There are yet others where the musical contrasts, submitted to a yet profounder study, form a powerful harmony out of which rises with vigor a melodious chant."

P. Fernandez Marques, in "El Universal": "... These scales made of fine colors and refined contrasts, compose his canvases like the chords of a chamber-music orchestra unfolding the notes of a spiritual and luminous Cantata... What has led us to these musical terms—the story of the artist or the contemplation of his works? Possibly both. For in all of his works there is a musicality that is joyful and simple, without great contrasts, made up of discrete colors and serene harmonies... Here emerges the particularity of this artist and his art. A man above nationalisms, he sees nature and human beings, both pictorially and spiritually, as part of the great universal whole. And so the particular that differentiates recedes before the general that unifies... Brushes saturated with experience, those of Baxte, obeying the dictates of his feelings which are generously human and universal."

The Plateresque in Mexican Architecture . . .

Continued from page 16

ness resulting from the advent to the country of power and riches, and originality in structural architecture was replaced by indulgence in experiments with surface decoration—in mixtures of varying proportions and profusion—there was great refinement of detail; and the blend produced an aroma of reasonable delicacy. It was spicy; but there was some restraint. It was not until more than a hundred years later that the whole spice cupboard was thrown in. As we shall see, the New World had some spices not available in the Old, but it was not until the Churrigueresque came along that, in the sheer exuberance

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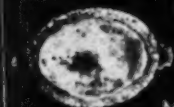
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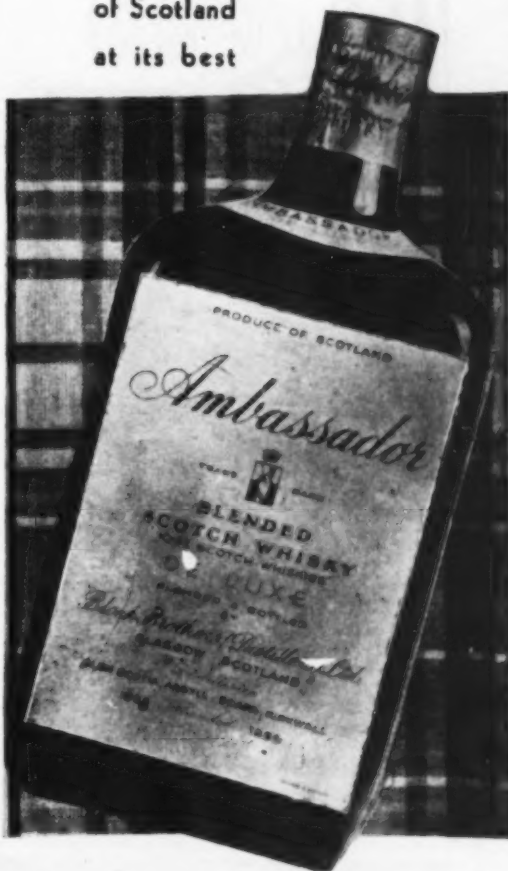
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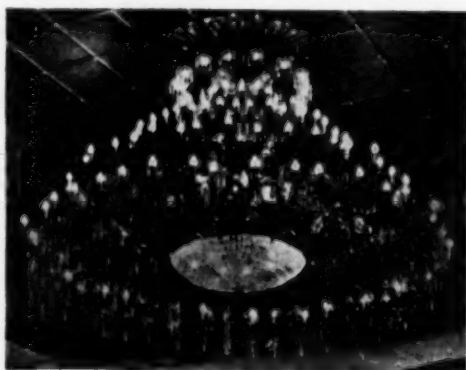
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of youth, the bride outdid the mother-in-law who had taught her.

In the development of the Plateresque, though there were overlapping and varied mixtures, there were, nevertheless, noticeable phases. At first, the mixture was predominantly Gothic—Mudéjar in spirit and in decorative details applied rather freely to essentially Gothic structures. Then, more and more, Renaissance motifs crept in, but still applied to Gothic structures. (We shall find them on the fronts of the early monastic churches of Mexico.) Then came Renaissance motifs on Renaissance buildings, with traces of the Gothic and Mudéjar spirit less conspicuous but still there; and the style went merrily on its way, peculiarly Spanish.

The first phase, sometimes called Gothic or Isabelline Plateresque, contemporaneous with the reign of that Catholic queen and still Gothic in spirit, was responsible for many magnificent tombs and carved altarpieces, the latter, in turn, greatly influencing the design of church facades. Heraldic devices came to be used extensively (Isabella's Castile and Ferdinand's Aragon could always be relied upon to furnish twins for architectural balance); and all through the Plateresque period examples of heraldry can be found in a gentle and sparkling sea of ornamental pilasters and floral ornament.

In the early years of the sixteenth century the influence of Italian sculptors was felt; and portrait-medallions, candelabra, and garlands of fruits and flowers captured the imagination of the Spaniards, who applied them in their own way to produce the latter or Renaissance phase of the Plateresque. The portal of the hospital of Santa Cruz in Toledo by Enrique de Egas is one of the finest early examples of the period, a beautiful and subtle blend of Italian details applied to Gothic form. The period reached its climax, however, in the facade of Salamanca University. This facade, completed in 1529, is simply a screen applied to a rough stone wall, but it is masterful in the disposition and scale of the ornamental motifs and particularly in the graduation of relief from minute and shallow below to bold above.



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Though interrupted by a premature frost which killed the blossoms before it was time for them to wither, the Plateresque, with its delicate blends, had become the first genuine, and remains to this day the most characteristically Spanish of all Spanish styles. The charming vagaries of the style are to be found in some churches, but, especially during the later phase, a period not only of increasing wealth but of intellectual, literary, and scientific development, it found its greatest expression in such buildings as palaces, public buildings, university buildings, and hospitals, rather than in ecclesiastical work. No really great cathedrals were built which consistently carry out the style. That is, not in Spain. There was one built, of a later date, finer, perhaps, than anything since the last of the Gothic, but to find it we shall have to wait until we sail back again across the Atlantic and drive up among the mountains and the lakes to the land of the Tarascan Indians.

And so to Bed in Tehuantepec . . .

Continued from page 12

the aura was entirely different. There was none of the queenly dignity in the sister-in-law as she brought the platters to the table almost on the run. The pretty slant-eyed girl that looked like a Balinese trotted behind her with a grace so natural that it seemed like a movement in a ballet. The expression on the face of this second kitchen maid and laundress was that of a radiant smiling mask. She served the dishes in a style all her own. She stood in one spot with her back to the balustrade and leaned halfway across the table.

"Isn't Señora Barker coming?" I said, hesitating to begin to eat.

"No, she'd rather eat in the kitchen."

"And your son?"

"He'd rather eat rice and beans with his mother in the kitchen."

We fell to the hot tortillas, the frijoles, and the scrambled eggs with an appetite. When the huge slices of watermelon came, Barker said: "You see we're just picnicking tonight, getting in so late. Tomorrow we'll feast on pancakes for breakfast and lobster for dinner."

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After the watermelon was served the girl went back to her ironing by moonlight. The night bird darted here and there making its ghostly squawking noise as it snapped at insects among the shadows.

"Tony is our Flit gun," Barker said. "He gets his own living. He doesn't like our food. We never feed him a crumb. But he's contented—even when the gate is open, he never ventures into the street or tries to escape. He hunts all night and sleeps all day. I guess you fellows could do with a bit of sleep yourselves."

When we were ready to make our arrangements for the night, Barker indicated glazed chamber pots with yellow asters and blue forget-me-nots stationed under each of the four double beds. But we preferred to make a pilgrimage to the W.C., each holding a stubby oil lamp with a circular handle, through which we crooked a forefinger. We passed under trellises of coral vine and between green wooden bins containing horned lizards. Barker had collected these rare and deadly poisonous reptiles for a zoo in the States. He raised one lid and stirred up the sluggish creatures with a stick. They were big fellows, about two feet long. Their baleful eyes shone in the lamp flame like polished black jewels, and their wetted and scaly hides looked tougher than rhinoceros armor. As they began undulating over one another, I thought of Othello's line: "Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads To knot and gender in."

"These are magnificent specimens," Barker was saying. "I should get a good price for them. The beauties are no trouble. They sleep almost all the time. They need little nourishment. Once a week I feed them a beaten-up egg yolk. They'd make nice pets if they weren't so poisonous." He half-lifted one affectionately with his stick. The creature opened his jaws menacingly with slow fury. Then he dropped back on the heap of his slow-squirming comrades. Barker closed the lid and we moved on under the trellis of coral vines.

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By the three lamp flames we examined the bath. The tub was a double square of smooth concrete with rounded edges. One half was full of clear dark water. Barker explained that you sat in the empty side on the three-legged stool and dipped the water from the full side with lacquered calabash and sloshed it over your soaped body. A servant poured the cold water into the open container from outside through a concealed tunnel. The whole scheme looked as refreshing as original—but somehow more akin to Pompeii or Japan than the Western Hemisphere.

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Later, after Myers and I had made our arrangements for the night, we lingered for a few minutes on the veranda.

The sister-in-law and the slant-eyed damsel brought a great double-size canvas cot out into the center of the patio, set it up securely and placed a heap of pillows on it.

"On moonlit nights, I sleep in shorts," Barker said. "On black nights, 'starko,' as the British say."

The moonlight was almost gone now, and without benefit of the guttering candle on the ironing-board, it would have been difficult to tell whether the patron wore trunks or let the night breeze refresh his body thoroughly.

Barker explained his original nocturnal habits. "I sleep here in the open the first part of the night, until the coolness comes, say at 1 A.M. Then I go to my hammock on the veranda, where I stay until about half-past four. Just before dawn I go to my bed in the bedroom. I find I can rest better by this process."

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and make the most out of the temperature. Besides, the changes break the monotony of the night."

The girl had laid her last ironed garment in the great basket and staggered into the storeroom with the load. She snuffed out the candle and disappeared. We said good night on the bedroom veranda. Barker made his progress through the almost imperceptible palm shadows to his imperial cot. Myers turned in. I remained for a moment looking up at the tropical design fretted in white-gold on the dark-blue marble of the sky. The invisible night bird brushed by my feet, making faint staccato squawks that sounded like noises I once heard come from an excited medium at a séance. I went in, and closed the curtained screen door gently. Myers was already in bed, his eyes turned up to the ivory image on the cross over his head. When I blew out my lamp and slipped into bed, a profound silence hung about the place. There were no passers-by. No village dogs barked. If cats prowled, they did it voicelessly and on noiseless pads.

"Peace—it's wonderful isn't it, tired businessman?" I said.

"Wonderful," Myers mumbled like a man talking in his sleep. "Though you and I wouldn't want it for a steady diet, it's easy to see there's something that holds Barker to Mexico."

"Yes," I mumbled back. "Three different beds a night. Three women to wait on one man."

Warriors of Ancient Mexico . . .

Continued from page 14

LANCES were used by the nobility as weapons or as signals. Below the sharp point of the lance was an ornamental head of feathers and paper, and placed underneath this were obsidian knives, so that the lance would also serve as a cutting weapon.

STANDARDS were in wide use all over Mexico, and were made of poles decorated with feathers, cane and colored papers, in the form of the arms-of-state or the insignia of the company. The Mexica arms depicted a tiger being made prisoner by an eagle. It is

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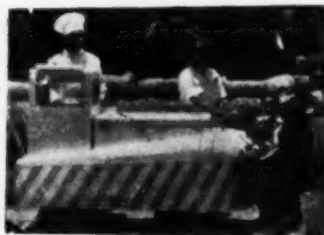
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said that when the standard was taken all the men ran away, because it was an evil omen and meant their sure death or capture. The Spanish soon learned of this, and won several important battles by shooting or capturing the standard-bearer. But the standard was usually so fastened that, although the bearer could walk about with it and still use his two hands for defense, he would have to be cut in pieces before the standard could be removed.

Padre Bernardino de Sahagun, in his "Historia de las cosas de la Nueva España," gives us a description of a warrior, which I shall briefly summarize: "The warrior used a helmet of red feathers, with gold, and around the helmet a crown of rich feathers, out of the middle of which rose a handful of rich feathers of the Quetzal-bird, which were so long that they hung down the back. He wore anklets of feathers, all seeded through with little golden shells, and had decorations of rich plumage. He carried a shield with a golden rim, all covered with rich plumage, and on the bottom part hung tassels and fringes of brightest feathers.

"He wore a necklace of precious stones, all of equal roundness, of jade and turquoise, very fine. He wore golden arm bands, and carried a little drum on his back. The drum was painted to resemble the hide of the tiger, and was all decorated with feathers, interlaced with gold, and stripes of the same metal, and with golden flames around the rim. He carried a kind of standard, called ocelototee, made of tiger skins, with golden stripes."

Clothes and head-dresses were interlaced with many different kinds of feathers: eagle, parrot, quetzal, humming-bird, wild turkey, etc., and with skins of animals like the mountain-lions, wolves, jaguars, foxes and dogs. Those who had killed or taken enemies wore as insignia of their fortitude, sandals, a long wide painted loin-cloth, a cape of different colored feathers, had their hair cut short, but leaving a long braid, in which was worn a feather, a tassel, and a golden ornament holding the whole together.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS were widely used, both for signalling and to make noise to frighten the



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enemy and, "loosen his bowels." The chiefs carried little drums on their backs, which they tapped to give directions. A big upright drum was used to call the people together. They also had whistles, flutes and conch-shell horns, besides long wooden horns which made a mysterious thundering noise.

The Mexica waged perpetual war against the people of Tlaxcala, Michoacan, Guatemala, Pánuco and other nations at the borders of their spreading empire. It was a custom that upon being elected to the throne, the king made war on someone not yet incorporated into the Mexican empire, to prove his claim to fame. It is said that the ruler Tlaoac was poisoned by his own people because he lacked the valor to make conquests.

Wars were held then for the same reasons they are held now, but were conducted in rather novel fashion. If, for instance, the Mexica wanted to expand, they would send merchants to the territory desired, with instructions to spy and stir up trouble. They looked over the land, the passes, roads, fortifications, enemy arms and numbers, etc.; and made and painted hieroglyphic books from their observations. If the merchants were attacked because of their insolent behavior, it was taken as a grave insult to their king. This was because they were acting as his emissaries, and he would demand a huge compensation which was, of course, usually haughtily turned down. Of else the King would send his tax-collectors into the territory to see if they could bluff the other chiefs into paying tribute. If they were insulted or attacked, and they purposely invited trouble by their arrogant behavior, the King took it as a grave personal insult.

He would then call in his two chief generals and show them the maps and picture-books that the merchants had brought in. He would then tell them to assemble the captains and notify them that there was going to be a war. They met to decide the "justness" of the war and then called in the old men of the tribe

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before them, to tell about past wars that they had participated in, and to give opinions as to the best procedure to follow at present.

The captains then went to all of the subject territories and commanded the local chieftains to gather provisions in the form of mantels, food, feathers, arms, shields, head-dresses, cloth, jars, etc. Then the large war drum, the "panhuehuatl," was sounded, and when the people had assembled they were given arms. Then the enemy was notified that there was a war on, as it was not considered proper to call a war without previous notification.

Once the expedition was ready, they sent ambassadors to the enemy to ask for retribution; compensation for stolen goods, for dead merchants, or for insulted ambassadors. The ambassadors took some idols with them and told the enemy to place them in their own temples. If they did, this meant submission, and they were let off with a light tribute. If they wouldn't, then they were harangued at length by the ambassadors who told them vividly about the vast numbers of the Mexica, their resources, their allies, and what they were capable of doing. The ambassadors went calling nightly on all of the nobles they thought could be bribed and offered them high positions if they would refuse to fight when the Mexica approached. Then they would go back to the enemy ruler and make a final plea for peace, with ever greater threats of violence. If the ruler then refused to put the Mexica idols into his temples, the ambassadors would declare that besides the other wrongs, imaginary or real, the situation had now turned into a religious war, and that such grave insult demanded grave punishment. After promising to hang the enemy ruler, the ambassadors departed very haughtily. The wonder of it all is that they were allowed to depart!

Carriers loaded with food were then sent ahead to leave caches for the armies to come. They also



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constructed water tanks, and built roads and bridges for the advancing armies.

The army marched in marvelous silence and order, with many scouts, flankers, and rearguards. Detachments were continually sent to the flanks to explore canyons and ravines along the way.

Priests went in front, with idols on their backs, carrying them with tump-lines, a day's march ahead of the army. Then came the captains and picked brave men one day's march ahead of the mass of the army to reconnoiter. Then came, in order, the soldiers of the triple alliance: Tenochtitlan, Texcoco and Tacuba, followed by the smaller companies of the provinces, all a day's march behind the other. As they were to be given food along the route of march by chieftains of towns through which they must pass, if they all arrived simultaneously, there would not be enough food for them all.

When near the enemy they arranged a united camp. The army consisted of some 24,000 men, arranged in "xiquipiles" of 8,000 men under a general, and this was broken down into companies of 200 to 400 men, and squads of 20 men each. Some troops were always kept in reserve, and numerous camp workers, men and women, probably made up another 10,000.

When the enemy was in sight they called him to a conference and told him that if he would surrender, at that moment, he could keep his life and property but would have to pay tribute and submit himself to the ruler of Tenochtitlan. The alternative was that he and all his people could be enslaved or sacrificed, and have to pay higher tribute, and have their town burnt. This was repeated several times after each refusal, each time making greater threats.

If the enemy persisted a huge pyre was lit on which incense was thrown, which was a signal for imminent battle. The fire was then stepped on and the coals dispersed to all sides, being symbolic of the coming dispersement of their adversaries.

In each province was a regular battlefield, held sacred, and ready for battle, at which they gathered. At a signal from the priests given upon a shell trumpet, both sides rushed at each other whooping, whist-

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ling and shouting. Diego Muñoz Camargo in his, "Historia de Tlaxcala," described this picture of the noise and shock of battle: "—having horns and trumpets made of wood, dancing and singing war songs, and cheering on their comrades with great noisemaking, and more and greater yelling, whooping and shouting at the time of battle, playing their drums, and shell, and trumpets, that made thundering noises, and put not a little fright into faint hearts, accompanied by the immense outcry and uproar, helped by the noise of the blows of clubs upon their shields."

Battles were conducted with strict discipline. The men looked to their captains, and the captains to the field-marshal for orders, which were given by drum-taps, whistles, waving lances, or by waves of the hands.

The order of battle was usually a combined attack, at some distance, by archers and slingsmen. This would be followed at a shorter distance by spear and dart throwers. Next would come the swords and clubs, and an attempt to break the line of the enemy, and outflank them or attack their rear.

They fought by squadrons, row upon row, one squadron at a time, presenting a fairly small active front to the enemy. This explains to some extent why Cortés was not readily overthrown, as never more than four or five hundred men could get at him at one time. The rest would be in back, pushing their comrades, and trampling on their heels, causing great confusion.

Much use was made of ambush, such as hiding men in pits or under grass shelters, or pretending to run away in order to lure the enemy into territory filled with men lying in holes, or having deep holes lined with sharp stakes, covered with camouflage.

The object of most battles was not to kill the enemy, unless for some outrageous insult, but to take prisoners for sacrifice. Often, in order to obtain victims for a sacrifice, a ritual war would be held with their neighbors, called the War of the Flowers. When enough prisoners were taken by both sides, then the war was over. A soldier was not commended for the



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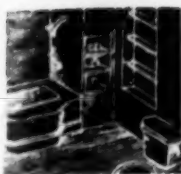
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number of dead he left on the field, but for the number of prisoners he presented to the field-general after the battle. This is another contributing cause of the fall of the Mexica before the Spanish.

When they had either taken enough prisoners for sacrifice, or the other side had surrendered, the battle was over. Then the dead were counted, the wounded taken to surgeons, and the prisoners sent to the rear. Scribes dutifully noted all the pertinent facts in their picture books to send to their ruler. Court-martials were held "on-the-spot." Soldiers who had not obeyed orders or had run away were put to death. If two soldiers disputed over the possession of a prisoner the field-general would decide who was the owner. If any soldier had revealed his general's plans to the enemy he was chastised as a traitor: both his lips were cut off, then the nose, the ears, both elbows and feet, and if his sons and relatives had known of his treachery but hadn't denounced him, they were submitted to slavery.

Tribute demands were then made upon the conquered, which depended on what they grew or made. Occasionally governors were installed to rule them. Tax-collectors and other officials were sent in to be sure that the demands were always promptly met. If there was any danger, a garrison was left.

After the battle, there was a triumphal return to Tenochtitlan, the army walking through streets covered with green branches and flowers. All the new soldiers who had done well were given mantles and embroidered loin-cloths and permission to wear them. To the veterans, who had now taken their third or fourth prisoner, were given more valuable gifts, such as nose and lip-plugs, and the right to wear them. Some were made nobles and given estates. Others were given the great honor of wearing tassels and plumage on their top-knot, and sandals with golden bells on their feet.

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If the king himself had taken a prisoner, the captive was dressed in the finest clothes, bedecked with the insignia of the Sun, and decorated with magnificent jewels. Then he was delivered to the high priest for sacrifice. Later his head was stuck on a high pole, his skin taken off and stuffed with cotton, and put in the Ruler's palace. The Mexica showed much administrative ability in having the conquered people give provisions and men to help conquer other peoples. It has been said that this is a great economic principal: to get out of war the elements of making war. In the case of the Mexica, it had been successfully learned!

Literary Appraisals . . .

Continued from page 36

At the same time he drops a decent tear over the fact that so many Spaniards seem to go hungry. In Maragato "it is not always easy to think fast or to move fast when bread is five pesetas a kilogram." That, like the contrast between the luxurious hotel in Corunna and "the lean, fierce face of Spain" seen elsewhere is sound reporting, and it tempers occasional coyness and superficiality on other pages.

Authors who give the impression that automobile travel in Spain is easy if only one has money incur a certain responsibility. By leaving out much that is difficult, worrying, sometimes dangerous, they flatter the inexperienced into thinking that anyone could do as well. Gas stations are few, so are garages with mechanics who can mend broken parts. Spain is not yet Connecticut.

Yet it is not fair to be too critical. The book leaves the reader with the feeling that he knows Spain and Spaniards well and indeed the chief characteristics are set forth. Only the old Spanish hand concerned with darker and deeper problems will complain about this type of popular treatment. **M. A.**

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